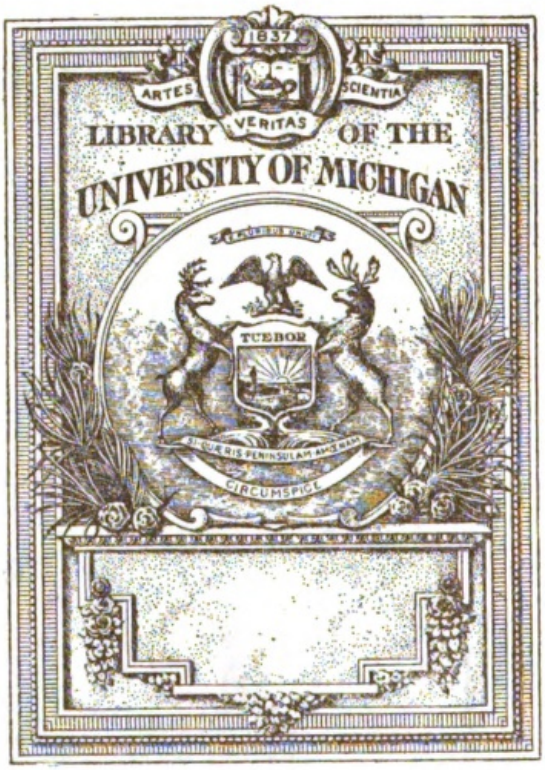
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THE STRAND MAGAZINE

An Illustrated Monthly



Vol. LIX

JANUARY TO JUNE

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1920

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"AS THE MINUTES WORE ON, THE TENSION OF THE WAITING BECAME MORE AND MORE ACUTE. THERE WAS A SENSE OF EXPECTATION—ALMOST OF EXALTATION—ANYTHING MIGHT HAPPEN NOW."

(See page 8.)

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The Lych-Gate

By MRS BAILLIE REYNOLDS

Illustrated by W SMITHSON BROADHEAD

"CAPITAL! Capital! Encaw! Encaw!" cried Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs, clapping her plump hands with animation. "*How* good, isn't he? Never dream he was an amateur, would you, now? Oh, *please*, Mr. Guilding, don't leave the piano! Just one more—just *one*. We are simply dying to hear you again, are we not, Sir Marius?"

"Certainly, certainly," agreed Marius Brandon, hastily.

As a fact, he would as soon have listened to an ass braying in a field as to the efforts of Mr. Guilding to imitate the current music-hall turn; but, as he murmured later on to Ella Crosbie—it staved off worse things. Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs was quite capable, as he knew by bitter experience, of calling upon the party to play forfeits, and he might find himself condemned to stand in a ring of giggling persons, and embrace one of the elderly Misses Pilkins; or take off his shoes in public for the idiotic purpose of jumping over them.

Mr. Guilding, meanwhile, hemmed and hawed for the proper lapse of time, and then with a far-away expression, manipulating the keys with his gaze on the ceiling, said in a soft little voice:—

"My Mother-in-law. A meditation."

The announcement was followed by an explosion of mirth, as though the subject announced had never before been treated by the professional joker. The performer proceeded to meander through any amount of verses, interspersed with dialogue, apparently culled from some jest book of the date 1850 or thereabouts, in which the married hero, condemned to reside in a suburban villa, finds his young wife unequal to the task of coping with the tradespeople, the servants, and her twin infants. To two-thirds of the audience this theme was, it seemed, excruciatingly funny, and so eager was the applause when the end came that there was no need for the Hall and the Manor House to perjure themselves individually or collectively in praise of the performance.

Mr. and Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs may be best described as belonging to the ammunocracy. They purchased their estate near the village of Endlake about the second year of the war. The lady was at the head of every subscription list, in the van upon every committee—eager to put herself, her house, and her wealth at the service of the community; for, as she was wont to phrase it, "we simply gotter win this war."

When peace came, the Crosbies at the Manor House, and Sir Marius Brandon at the Hall, were incapable of affronting the kindly creature to whom they owed so much. But really, her parties were awful. Hugh Crosbie, V.C., described them as "the limit"—and they were impossible to avoid. Marius remarked that they were developing a new sport—the art of eluding invitations to Goldacres—and that these were harder to decline than Greek irregular verbs, since the simple but effective method of Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs was to rush you.

"Now," she would cry, hurrying into the room almost before she could be announced, "I have come to rope you all in! No escape, you know—no peace for the wicked, as they say. I have collected a most interesting house-party, and I want you all to come up and organize a little fun. I won't fix a date until I have secured you all!"

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So here they all were, duly assembled. There were the vicar and his wife, nobly endeavouring to look as if they liked it; there was Sir Marius himself, accompanied by the elder sister who kept house for him, and a nephew and niece who were on a visit. There were a bunch of Crosbies, bravely resisting their impulse to sit next the Brandons and talk to nobody else; a group of village residents, such as the Misses Pilkins, rejoicing in the breaking down of social barriers which Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs seemed to have achieved; and, lastly, the house-party, a mixed crowd of a wonderful kind.

"Everyone a genius in his or her way," as the beaming hostess had explained to Mrs. Reed, the vicar's wife—a woman upon whose sensitive face was stamped the tragedy of the mother who has lost her only son. "Fancy, at present young Guilding is just a clerk in my husband's office at Cardiff; shouldn't be surprised if we all live to see him a star turn at one of the Halls, should you now? And the two Miss Greens—aren't they striking girls? Both on the Boards, my dear, and rising fast! And, of course, Billy Buffles is a violinist, and little Miss Carr writes, and Henry Hudson illustrates—all so clever, aren't they?" Her face fairly beamed with triumph as she surveyed the recipients of her hospitality, and Mrs. Reed murmured, "Most interesting."

"Oh, but I tell them we are every bit as interesting down in the country as what they are in London, what with our young V.C. and our baronet colonel, who raised a battalion off his own bat, as you might say——"

The "baronet-colonel" was on the verge of tears by the time that Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs's stately butler had announced supper.

"Now, Sir Marius, I am going to be noble and give you up," cried the hostess, as he dutifully approached her. "The vicar will lend me an arm when you've all gone in. I want you to take Miss Carr—I know your tastes are literary!"

Marius obediently offered his arm to an unassuming girl in white. He had been wondering all the evening who she was, for she did not conform to what Hugh called "the T.-B. type." He had noticed how difficult she found it to smile at the humours of Mr. Guilding. Still, she was a member of the Goldacres house-party, and thus could hardly be either aristocratic or interesting. Her lack of amusement might quite likely be the result of egotism. He had often been told that authors care to talk of nothing but their own work.

"I hear that you write," he began, with that politeness which he ever deemed a duty. "I'm afraid I shall have to confess straight off that I never read any of your work. Could you supply me with the names of some of your books?"

"Oh, I'm sorry," said she, demurely, "but you must try again! That won't do. I could no more supply you with a list of my works than you could describe to me your sensations when under fire. But, in case you find it difficult immediately to put forth another conversational feeler, may I have a turn? I have just heard something very curious about this village, and I want to know whether there is anything in it."

Marius turned his grave eyes upon her with astonishment. This young person was actually as different as she seemed! He brightened perceptibly. "Go ahead! Any small local knowledge which I may possess is at your service."

"But perhaps you belong to that large and no doubt estimable class of mind which makes fun of the supernatural?"

His face changed, and he started. "By no means. But are you going to talk about the supernatural?"

She hesitated a moment, surprised at his altered tone. "Yes, unless you feel it too utterly incongruous in this *milieu*. I grant you that it sounds a bit unexpected. And if I must make the humiliating confession, it was by eavesdropping that I came by the information which I want confirmed. I overheard your wife—or is it your sister?"—indicating pretty Phyllis Manning seated opposite.

"My niece."

"Ah, your niece! She was talking to Miss Crosbie, and she said she was determined to watch the lych-gate ten days hence—on All-Hallow-e'en. Now, why does she want to do that? And why was Miss Crosbie so urgent in imploring her not to do it?"

"I shall not allow her to do it," returned the man, bluntly. "But, if I do as you ask, and tell you why, you will probably laugh at me. Perhaps," he subjoined, after a pause, "that will do me good."

She lifted her eyes to his—eyes of a lovely periwinkle blue, which with her dark hair made a pleasing effect, and gave distinction to her irregular face. "You don't look as if people often laughed at you," said she, quietly.

To his own vexation he coloured quite hotly. "Takes me for the local Dogberry," he thought. "When I ope my mouth, let no dog bark." Aloud he went on: "I have no doubt I need to be laughed at for a good many things: But upon this subject I decline to permit it."

She was instantly grave. "That sounds formidable. But I promise you that if

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you are in earnest I shall try not to be flippant."

"I am sure you would not," was his impulsive reply, which surprised him as he spoke it; for how could he know? However, he had said it, and he turned to her, beginning his story in a lowered voice.

"We are geographically in England in this village," said he, "but in our heart and our traditions we are thoroughly Welsh. According to a Welsh legend, in any church dedicated to All Souls—a very uncommon dedication—it is said that, if you watch by the lych-gate on All Saints' Night—not All-Hallow-e'en, as my niece thinks, but the night between All Saints' and All Souls' Days—you will see in bodily form all those in the village who will be called to their rest before next year at the same date. The folks around here largely believe this, and there are many tales concerning it. I was apt to be very scornful of such things until—last year."

He made a pause, and she said, softly: "Never mind!" Her voice was notably gentle and very individual in tone. "If you dislike to speak of it, I will let you off, although I am thrilled."

He met and answered her smile. "Well, last year, on All Saints' Day—about ten days, as you know, before the Armistice, I had been to dine at the Manor House, and walked home through the churchyard. Have you seen our church?"

"Yes; Mrs. Reed took me there yesterday. It is very ancient."

"Very. You will remember that a path between two high walls leads up to the



"MR. AND MRS. TREMLETT-BIGGS MAY BE BEST DESCRIBED AS BELONGING TO THE AMMUNOCRACY."

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lych-gate, and that the south porch of the church is in a straight line from thence. The churchyard is always used as a short cut through the village, and I walked home from the Manor House as usual, that way. When I got to the porch I went inside it for a moment, in order to obtain shelter to strike a match to light my pipe. As I was doing so I looked up, and there just facing me, under the lych-gate through which I must shortly pass, I saw Godfrey Reed, the vicar's son, in his uniform. When he saw that I was looking at him, he raised his hand and saluted, with a smile. I noticed there were three pips on his cuff, instead of two, and I called out, 'Halloa, Godfrey, got promotion? Good biz!' He did not reply, but turned back and hurried off, as if very eager to reach the vicarage, which is, as you know, at the farther end of the long passage. I had a moment's difficulty with my pipe, but as soon as I had it going I hastened after him, and was a little astonished that I failed to overtake him. However, I guessed that he must be anxious to get in before the house was all shut up; they were not expecting him to get leave, and it was late. I went home, and next morning I told my sister, who lives with me, that Godfrey was home; and directly after breakfast I went round to the vicarage. *He was not there*—had never been home. But when I told the story, his mother fainted dead-off. I had never given a thought to the legend or the fatal date. Well, the boy was killed out there, the last day before the Armistice. He had been promoted captain a fortnight before his death."

Miss Carr's eyes, as he looked searchingly into them, told him eloquently how much the story impressed her.

"You believe it?" he asked.

"Certainly I believe it."

"I should hardly tell a story so against myself if it were not true. It seems incredible that I should never for an instant have remembered the local belief. But, you see, I didn't attach any importance to it—then."

"But now you are realizing that, whatever theory you may tack on to it, the fact remains. You saw what you saw."

"I know I saw him. So plainly that no least suspicion of his not being there in bodily presence visited me; though, when I considered the matter afterwards, I remembered that there was something abnormal in my seeing him so plainly. There was not nearly light enough for me to have counted the pips on his sleeve."

"I hope," said she, after a meditative silence, "that this story will not get about among——"

He cut in eagerly, "Among our hostess and her crowd of freaks."

She burst into merry laughter, and he caught himself up, with some confusion. "Well—how should you describe them yourself?"

"We are rather a menagerie," she confessed, "but we do give her so much satisfaction. This kind of entertainment helps her to forget her tragedy. Do you know she has had six children, and not one of them lived six months? Her husband said to me the other night, 'I'd be bound to get the moon for my old missus if she fancied it—she's lost so much.' Isn't that rather pathetic?"

Marius looked across the table at the vulgar, beaming countenance of the lady in question; and saw her with new eyes. He let his gaze rest with deep approbation upon the face of the girl beside him.

"But what of this crew of hers?" said he, provocatively—solely in order to hear her defence. She responded instantly to the prick of his supercilious tone. She told him how young Guilding supported his old parents by supplementing his earnings in the way they had seen that night. He heard how bravely the two Miss Greens, their occupation gone, scrubbed hospital floors all war-time. He listened with increasing appreciation. Little Miss Carr! A mere nobody; one of those thousand undistinguished writers who fill the pages of the penny magazines at prices which would make the sweater blush. She was opening new doors for Marius. He was taking deep interest in a woman for the first time since his jilting at three-and-twenty.

"Don't you think," he suggested, as they left the supper-table, "that we might go now and sit in the conservatory with our cigarettes while the young people amuse themselves in the way they like best?"

She smiled, but shook her head. "I am going to bid you good night now and slip away. Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs told me not to break my rule of early to bed. I am not very strong; in fact, I have recently been ill—and I am not equal to these late hours."

They were in the hall, near the stairfoot, and she gave him her hand with a rather wistful smile. "Good night, Sir Marius the Seer. I wonder whether, if you should go to the church-porch again this year, you might see *me* flit past? But I expect not, as I don't belong to Endlake village; a stranger would not count."

Her words gave the man a queer shock. She likely to die! He could not believe it. There was something intensely vital about her.

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During the following fortnight they saw much of each other. She came over to lunch at the Hall, and Miss Brandon agreed with her brother that she was well-bred and interesting. Marius sent to Mudie's for a complete catalogue of fiction, but he searched it in vain for the title of any book that she had written.

Then he tried Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs. "Do tell me about Miss Carr's authorship. What does she write?"

To his surprise, the estimable lady turned a bright pink. "Well, Sir Marius, I should *love* to tell you, but I have made a promise," she stammered. "I have given my solemn word not to talk of her writings—in short, I must beg of you not to mention the subject." She broke off in confusion, and added, laughing nervously, "I don't know what you will think of me, it seems so rude to refuse your very natural request."

"Not at all, I assure you. I honour you for keeping your word to Miss Carr——"

"Oh, Sir Marius, you are always so kind! Your kindness makes it harder than ever for me to hold out—but, you see, it is not as if Madeline was well and strong. She has had a bad breakdown—sorrow and overwork; and so much depends upon her not being distressed; so if you would be so very good as not to press me—for, to own the truth, I'm a poor hand at keeping a secret."

It was after this conversation that Marius remarked to his sister, "I shall grow quite fond of Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs if we see much more of her."

He brooded over the thought of the girl's frail health; and her words to him, about seeing her flit past, lingered uncomfortably in his memory, until he was almost persuaded that it might be well for him to repair to the churchyard on the fatal night, merely in order to reassure her by telling her afterwards that he had *not* seen her wraith.

Meanwhile he spoke seriously to his niece, Phyllis, on the necessity for silence respecting the local tradition and his own experience. He reminded her that nothing excites people so much as an authentic ghost story, and pointed out that the least indiscretion might draw to the churchyard a noisy party, armed with banjos and comic songs.

She earnestly promised to say nothing that could lead to this horrible result; and when the date came round he felt fairly certain that the secret had not leaked out, for they all met at the Manor House that evening, and nothing was said upon the subject.

Kind Mrs. Crosbie had felt it incumbent upon her to issue to Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs and her whole party that invitation for which she knew the poor lady longed. They were all there, and Marius thought Miss Carr looked less fragile. Her face had more colour and her eyes more light than when he saw her first. In fact, he had reached the point of considering her in the light of the future Lady Brandon. Yet, snobbery or not, he could not blind himself to the uncomfortable results of choosing a wife from the Goldacres house-party! His mind *would* run upon a wedding with Mr. Guilding to entertain the guests.

Miss Carr was charming, but she was entirely obscure—by birth—or she would not have been glad of an invitation to Goldacres; and in her profession she was evidently only a cut above a girl clerk. The reticence of Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs had made him pretty certain that the young authoress was what is known in the writing world as a "ghost"—one who supplies plots and situations for the well-known writer, and whose name never appears. It seemed a bit of a come-down for him, at four-and-thirty, to fall so deeply in love with a girl of no family as to lose all sense of what his position demanded. But he felt his danger.

Everything she said or did that night pleased him absurdly. She drew him like a magnet; and he had the feeling that, should they come together, this power of attraction would increase, rather than diminish. It was a charm which suggested endless reserves behind.

He was curiously little conceited for a man who had been master of the title and the estates since his teens; but he could not help knowing that he was a "catch" in the matrimonial market. With Madeline Carr he had not the least touch of the discomfort of being angled for. She was friendly—even cordial—but there was an aloofness.

As the evening wore on he realized that he must either ask this girl to be his wife, or go away and never see her again. His heart was conscious of a fierce pang when she rose at a very early hour to slip away home—bringing back to his mind that dread concerning her health which he had been pushing into the background. He had to let her go alone, for he had promised Mrs. Crosbie to act in a charade; and she achieved her escape almost unnoticed.

She, on her side, found it so hard to tear herself away from him that she felt quite uncomfortable. But she had an appointment to keep, and so was forced to steel her heart. During her visit to Goldacres, a friendship had grown up between her and the vicar's wife. Mrs. Reed was a lonely woman—since her bereavement tragically so. Madeline's sympathy had

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gone out to her; and when she confided to the girl her passionate desire to go that night to the churchyard, but confessed that she would be afraid to watch alone for fear lest she might see—well, other things than Godfrey—Madeline had at once volunteered to be her companion. Mr. Reed not only declined the vigil, but disapproved of the adventure.

The craving mother had a wistful, forlorn hope that, as Godfrey had come once, he might conceivably again visit the little grey church so intimately connected with all he held most dear. And on that night, so it is said, all the souls go wandering; he would come if he could, she knew, she felt it.

They made a plan by means of which they could keep watch, themselves unseen.

Near the west end of the ancient church, in the south wall—that is to say, between the south porch and the tower—there was what is known as a "low-side" window; one of those windows whose exact original purpose remains obscure; cut very near the ground, so that it is easy to see either in or out of the church through it. Mrs. Reed's idea was that she and Madeline, warmly clad, should lock themselves into the church, and watch the lych-gate through the low-side window.

The plan was quite easy of accomplishment, since Mrs. Reed had the keys of the church in her charge. She seemed to think it was more probable that Godfrey, if he came, should show himself within the building, in his accustomed place in the vicarage pew.

The two ladies reached the church soon after eleven, before the return of any of the guests from the party, and entered it quite unseen.

It was not a very dark night, but the light varied, for clouds drove continually across the waning moon. Madeline, as she sat in her warm wraps, her delicately-cut chin resting on her hand, leaning forward in earnest contemplation, found that her mind would not remain focused upon the matter in hand, but would stray to the thought of Sir Marius. She had all the novelist's eagerness for the observation of character, and she found this man an absorbing study.

Here was a typical Briton of the upper class. Previous to the war, his life had been the narrow, limited life of a country gentleman. He had not been a soldier at all. Yet, when the great adventure presented itself, he had embraced it with both hands—which seemed to show how superficial was the narrowness, how deep the intrinsic nobility. This year, as she was becoming aware, he was having another experience, just as new to him as war. He was falling in love with a girl who, as he believed, did not belong to his own class. Would he show, in this matter also, the spirit of the paladin?

She thought of him so earnestly that she almost felt as if her thoughts must draw him to her in bodily presence.

According to agreement, she was watching the lych-gate, and Mrs. Reed, who was strung to a high point, was keeping her eyes fixed upon the place wherein, as little boy, big boy, and young man, Godfrey had been used to sit. As the minutes wore on, the tension of the waiting became more and more acute. The old church seemed full of soft breathings—of stirrings, so low that one could hardly describe them. A sudden loud sighing noise startled Madeline horribly, until she realized that it was only the church clock preparing to strike midnight. The long, slow strokes fell heavily upon the silence. There was a sense of expectation—almost of exaltation—anything might happen now—and in fact there was the sound of footsteps—many footsteps, cautiously subdued—the footsteps of those who crept, timidly—who hardly dared—— Ah, could it be the approaching band of souls?

Mrs. Reed's breath came in sobbing gasps—those arriving, whoever they were, had entered the porch. There was a scuffling noise—the murmur of speech—and then, shockingly, an unmistakable giggle.

Madeline sprang to her feet. Mrs. Reed clutched her wrist convulsively. "You locked the door, Madeline?"

"Yes, I locked it. Oh, how unspeakable! Listen! It is the Goldacres crowd, I feel sure of it! How could they have heard about it?"

She had hardly spoken before the figure of a man, muffled to the eyes, came strolling past the window.

He was staring directly in, and it seemed impossible that he should not descry them; but the moon shone across the roof of the nave, and flung the interior of the church into pitch-black shadow.

"Don't stir—don't move, or he'll see us," she contrived to whisper, the drops breaking out upon her forehead as Mr. Guilding—who was loudly whistling "Any time's kissing-time," paused, stooped, and steadily gazed in.

"I say," he called out, over his shoulder, "if we could open this window, we might get inside. It would be warmer in here than that stony porch!" He passed his hand round the panes, which fortunately were not made to open.

"Oh, be quiet!" came the voice of Connie Green. "Don't go breaking something, or they'll know we've been here. Do come back and sit down—or go home! How can you suppose anything will happen if you make this noise?"

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He lingered a moment and then turned reluctantly away. Not an instant too soon; for the unlooked-for intrusion had been altogether too much for the strained nerves of Mrs. Reed, and she slipped from her chair in a dead faint.

Even Madeline, usually self-possessed, felt herself trembling as she stooped over the unconscious lady and loosened the scarf from about her throat. She had no choice but to remain where she was, in perfect silence, until the invalid came round. She must needs stay there, crouched upon the ground, Mrs. Reed's head in her lap, while scuffling, giggling, and occasional squeals sounded from the porch, interspersed, as time wore on, with what sounded like wrangling. Then, very suddenly, the vicar's wife stirred, started, and before Madeline could prevent it, gave out a long, loud wailing cry which echoed along the aisles, and was answered, after a moment's breathless pause, by a series of little shrieks from outside, followed by a wild stampede.

In her wrought-up condition, the desire to laugh fought in Madeline with the desire to weep. She dreaded lest she should become hysterical, but she was saved by the necessity of soothing the trembling mother, and assuring her that the intruders were gone away.

"I can't bear any more of it, Madeline—you must take me home," sobbed Mrs. Reed. "My nerves are all to pieces. My husband was right to try and persuade me not to come. Oh, are you sure they are all gone?"

"If you will wait here just a few minutes, I will slip out quietly and reconnoitre," replied the girl.

"Yes—very well—I suppose you had better—but don't go out of call," begged the poor thing.

Madeline rose, crept to the door, listened intently, and then turned the key, which slipped round silently, for Mrs. Reed had oiled it carefully the day before.

The soft west-country wind blew gratefully on her hot face, and she pushed back the hood of her long cloak, advanced to the entrance of the porch, and, her two hands upon the jambs of the outer arch, leaned forth and breathed deeply. There, before her, lay the mysterious night, and it struck awe into her soul. It was easy to believe that the air was filled with unseen presences—there was motion and murmur all about her, as she looked right and left, with perhaps a wistful hope in her that the man who filled her thoughts might be somewhere near; although, if he had ventured, she knew that the presence of the Goldacres crowd must have driven him away again.

The clouds were rushing across the moon's face, and she made another step forward, lifting up her arms and head to the heavens to see whether it rained. Then, satisfied that it did not, she retreated without noise into the church, swallowed in the shadows as soon as she was under the roof.

The man who was standing in the shelter of the lych-gate, blotted in its dense, impenetrable blackness, struck his fist over his heart with a choked cry, turned and stumbled away like a creature mortally stricken.

The following day Sir Marius presented himself at Goldacres in the early afternoon. Madeline Carr was startled by his changed appearance. His eyes were sunk, his face haggard, his whole demeanour feverish and unlike himself.

He found everyone at home, and the very atmosphere tingling with the tremendous thrill of the story told by those who had ventured to the churchyard the previous evening. The piercing, unearthly cry from the interior of the dark, empty church could proceed only from a soul in torment! Many and wild were the opinions held and theories advanced concerning it.

Marius listened grimly to the story, which cleared up for him the mystery of the sudden and apparently causeless flight of the psychic investigators.

He made but little comment, except to agree—so warmly as to flatter her—with Mrs. Tremlett-Biggs's dictum that "whatever they may have heard they brought it on themselves, and it was far better not to be meddling with these things."

He turned presently, under cover of the loud talk, to Miss Carr, who sat next him. "You were not of the party?" he asked, in a stiff, curiously-suppressed tone; and when she replied: "No, I was not," he turned very pale; but all he said was:—

"So I supposed."

There was a pause, in which it seemed to her as if the man's very thoughts reached out and touched her, so vivid was her consciousness of his presence. Then he murmured:—

"I must speak to you alone. Can we slip out into the conservatory?"

She glanced around. In the babel of chatter they were for the moment unnoticed; and she rose and went, he following, into the flower-scented warmth of the opulent winter-garden which was the pride of the master of Goldacres.

He made not at all the kind of wooing for which Madeline had been prepared. His manner, usually so calm, was charged with a despairing kind of vehemence—the urgency of one who will take no denial.

"But this is very imprudent," said the girl, mischievously. "What do you know

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of me, except that I am a member of this menagerie of cranks? Ought you not to make inquiries?"

"I have made observations instead. One finds out more that way."

Her lips parted in a rapturous smile. "What a lovely thing to say," she whispered.

He began to tremble. "Madeline, say yes—say yes! Don't keep me waiting, will you? Think how short life is—how little time we may have in which to be together! I want you to marry me now—and let me take you to the South of France."

She felt touched and her heart went out to him.

"But first," said she, "there is an awful revelation to be made. It is not so hard as it might have been, for I overheard you saying that you like the writings of the novelist who calls herself Gray Moor. Well—I am Gray Moor. I wrote those books."

He started, and gazed upon her half in worship, half in shame. "You mean that you use a pseudonym?"

"Yes. It saves such a lot of an uncomfortable kind of fame. One can go about, as it were, unchallenged. Now to tell you who I am. My father was that Lord George Carr who was killed in the Boer War, rather magnificently if you remember? He left his family badly off financially as well as in other ways. My brother fell in 1915, and I have had hard work to keep his boy at Eton. I want you to understand that I shall feel it my duty to continue doing this—that Lionel's children must be a tax upon me for some years——"

"Upon *us*, you mean," he replied, drawing her into his arms, so much moved, and so abased, that he could hardly utter the words.

"Now," she demanded, after a while, "do you feel a bit more cheery? When I first saw you I thought you had come to make some terrible announcement. Was it only the dread of committing yourself to a *mésalliance*?"

He seemed to her at a loss for a reply.

"There is something," she persisted, earnestly, "something more than that. You look quite ill—worse than I do, I believe, in spite of my having been up all night!"

He cried out vehemently: "You, too?"



"MADELINE MADE ANOTHER STEP FORWARD, LIFTING UP HER ARMS AND IT DID NOT, SHE RETREATED WITHOUT NOISE INTO THE CHURCH. THE AWAY LIKE A CREATURE

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"Why, were *you?*" she broke off, colouring warmly. "Surely *you* did not go to the churchyard too, did you? Ah, I see by your face that you did! Well, I told you a half-truth just now— I did *not* go with the Goldacres crowd—indeed, I had no idea they were going, and don't even yet understand how they got wind of it. But you have now acquired the right to hear exactly what I did do."



HEAD TO THE HEAVENS TO SEE WHETHER IT RAINED. THEN, SATISFIED THAT MAN STANDING IN THE SHADOW OF THE LYCH-GATE TURNED AND STUMBLED MORTALLY STRICKEN."

Marius listened voraciously to her account of her vigil with the vicar's wife.

"And you came out into the porch, alone?" he stammered. "You—your living self? You stood with your hands extended to me as though you would take farewell—and then you raised those same hands to heaven, looking up like a saint in a picture, as if telling me to follow you? Do you realize that I thought I had seen your wraith? I thought—I thought——"

"That if we were to have some time together here, you had better make haste," she whispered.

"Yes! Yes!"

She put her arms about his neck. "But, dear man, I am not a delicate woman at all! I have been ill, that's all—and I'm nearly well now! Are you prepared to undertake a union that may last for years and years? To have me still on hand when I grow old and ugly?"

His reply, though without words, was eloquent enough.

"What is borne in upon me," he said, presently, "is the conviction that it is always best not to *seek* any psychic experience. One gets so worked up that one becomes the prey of delusions. No more watching at the lych-gate for me!"

"Yet last night's experience made you understand yourself?".

'You are right," he answered, in a deep voice. "It showed me to myself, a petty-minded ass—a contemptible fool. I saw in a flash how short time is, and what are the things that really matter."

"Then the lych-gate has proved the gate of life for you and me."

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GILBERT AND SULLIVAN

THEN AND NOW

By MISS G.B. CROZIER

Illustrated by drawings by the late W. S. GILBERT, and costume designs by Percy ANDERSON.

THE gay and exquisite music and merry quips and jokes of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas—fresh during this New Year season as they were thirty and forty years ago—have once again taken the town by storm. The general beauty of decoration in the present production excels all previous records, and forms an ideal background for the dresses designed by Mr. Percy Anderson, which show a loveliness undreamed of thirty years ago, when the original designs for the first performances of "The Gondoliers" and "The Yeomen of the Guard" were made—embodying Sir W. S. Gilbert's conception of each character as seen in his mind's eye.

Readers will be specially interested to see some of these early costume drawings of Mr. Percy Anderson's, which, executed in faint water-colour, with scraps of gaily-hued silk, cloth, and wool, still pinned to the edges as guides to the costumier for material and colour, are reproduced amongst the illustrations, together with some new 1919 sketches which show the immeasurably greater freedom and imagination with which the famous designer of "Chu Chin Chow" renown, while keeping to the old Savoy traditions, now carries out such work.

Sir W. S. Gilbert's exact method of suggesting the effect he wanted is clearly seen in the two interesting sketches for characters in "The Grand Duke," which were drawn over twenty years ago on stray bits of paper in pen and ink, and sent to Mr. Anderson, who lately came across them again when turning out some papers.



DESIGN BY PERCY ANDERSON FOR THE COSTUME WORN BY COURTICE POUNDS IN THE ORIGINAL PRODUCTION OF "THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD" IN 1888.

H. A. LYTTON'S RECOLLECTIONS.

That fine old Savoyard, Mr. H. A. Lytton, has some recollections of the old days when on tour, which are highly entertaining.

Once when playing John Wellington Wells in "The Sorcerer" (where it will be recollected that in the last act the Sorcerer disappears through a trapdoor amidst red fire) something went wrong with the trap and it stuck when he had only disappeared half way! There was nothing for it but to climb out, and walk ignominiously off the stage. As he did so a voice from the front was heard to exclaim, "Hell's full!"—"a remark," says Mr. Lytton, "which gained the greatest applause of the evening." An ardent believer in "luck," Mr. Lytton declares that his lucky number is thirteen. He signed his first contract with the late Mr. D'Oyly Carte on the

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13th of the month, and that he rightly regards as a very special piece of luck! Then when specially hard up he scraped together all he could and went off with some friends to Monte Carlo. Going straight to the tables, he planked down all he had on No. 13, and won enough to spend a delightful holiday on the proceeds! He was in London thirteen years, then played out of London for thirteen years. The telephone number of his house starts with thirteen, and to complete the story, when recently on tour he bought up all the boots he could lay hands on at the provincial towns through which they passed, against a rainy day, and on counting up the number, of which he had kept no count, found that they amounted to thirteen!

His talent for "making up" amounts to genius, as for example, in "The Pirates of Penzance," in successfully depicting two such widely-contrasting individuals as the dapper little Major-General—a little cock-sparrow of a man—and the towering Pirate King, a part in which, with the help of various mechanical aids—faked shoulders, and the like—he performs the perfectly amazing feat of "making up" his height to six feet two.

Mr. Lytton and his company had some rather rough times when on tour during the war, and at one time were constantly in the thick of Zeppelin raids. They were at Sheffield when the town was bombed, and on going on to Hull met with a similarly warm reception, and on arrival in London within a few days were called on to face another severe raid, causing poor Fred Billington — that much-missed Savoyard who shared his dressing-room — to remark: "Harry! I believe the Kaiser's *got our tour!*"



1.

Dear Anderson.

This is the re-considered Prince of Monte Carlo. Very fair Ramilies wig, I think, & contrast with Barrington's black Louis XIV wig. This quite realizes the character.

W. S. Gilbert

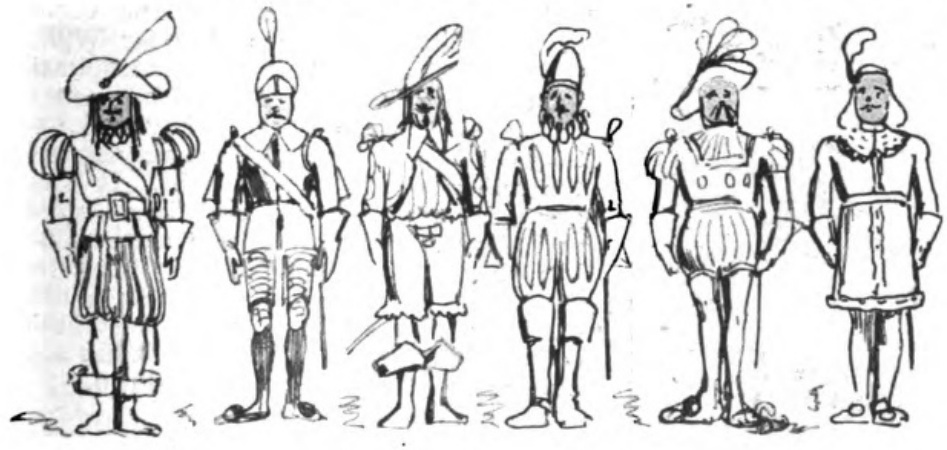
The Prince's dress should be of excellent quality—very gay & ornate. The Princess should wear a dress of the same period (or nearly) & so made as to allow of her dancing a wild jig.—No train. W. S. G.

SOME STORIES OF GILBERT.

Listening to the recollections of incidents which happened over forty years ago, there is a fascination in learning from a close family friend how W. S. Gilbert, when at work on "The Mikado," went round to see her with the verses for "Three Little Maids from School are We" in his pocket.

Taking them out he read them aloud and awaited her verdict—which predicted a great success. "Ah!" he replied, doubt in his eyes, "I wonder—I wonder!" The greatest writers are often the worst judges of what will prove popular in their own work.

It was for the same friend that



2.

This is my idea of the six Nobles. Of course you will greatly improve upon these crude suggestions

THE SKETCHES ON THIS PAGE—FOR COSTUMES IN "THE GRAND DUKE"—SHOW THE TROUBLE GILBERT TOOK TO OBTAIN THE EFFECT HE WANTED.

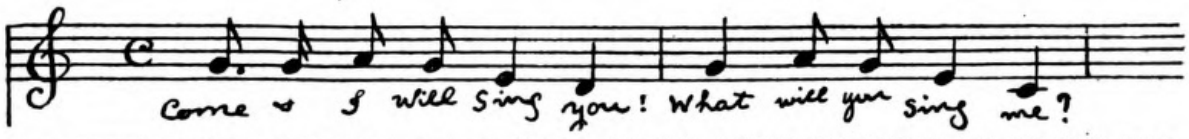
His notes read:—

(1) This is the re-considered Prince of Monte Carlo. Very fair Ramilies wig, I think, to contrast with Barrington's black Louis XIV. wig. This quite realizes the character.

The Prince's dress should be of excellent quality—very gay and ornate. The Princess should wear a dress of the same period (or nearly), but so made as to allow of her dancing a wild jig.—No train.

(2) This is my idea of the six nobles. Of course you will greatly improve upon these crude suggestions.

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THE OPENING WORDS OF THE OLD CORNISH CHANTY WHICH SUGGESTED TO GILBERT THE FAMOUS DUET, "I HAVE A SONG TO SING O!".

he drew an admirable caricature of himself in the manner of the "Bab Ballads" illustrations, with a large head—an excellent likeness—and dwindling body, on a treasured fan which already bore sketches by Sir John Tenniel, du Maurier, Linley Sambourne, and others, prompting the characteristic note which accompanied the return of the fan, and ran as follows: "I have done my best, but I am afraid that my right hand has lost the little cunning it once possessed. Certainly I have failed to impart to the individual represented any expression of that modesty and diffidence which he should feel at finding himself in such distinguished society." This interesting drawing is reproduced.

"The Lady of the Fan," to whom the writer is indebted for many charming recollections, having the double misfortune to lose both husband and almost all her income at one blow, was carried off by W. S. Gilbert and his warm-hearted wife and kept with them for weeks, while her own house and furniture were sold, and a tiny residence suited to her slender resources found and fitted up for her. Here W. S. Gilbert worked, as she describes it, "Like a carpenter!" He hung pictures, and did innumerable odd jobs, to make the little house look like a home, and noticing a bare space in the sitting-room, for all the large furniture had been sold, he sent a couple of exquisite little Chippendale book-case-cabinets to fill the gap, which still stand where he placed them, to hold her favourite books.



A CARICATURE OF HIMSELF DRAWN BY GILBERT ON A FAN.



DESIGN FOR THE KINGS' DRESSES IN THE PRESENT REVIVAL OF "THE GONDOLIERS."

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"I HAVE A SONG TO SING O!"

Apropos of the writing of "The Yeomen of the Guard," it seems that Sir William Gilbert used to attribute his first inspiration for that most famous of duets between the Merry Man and his Maid, "I have a Song to Sing O!" to an old Cornish chanty sung by the sailors on board his yacht. It was a great favourite of his, and is so quaint and altogether delightful that a friend who has often sung in it with the Gilberts and some party of young friends—Sir William leading as "Questioner"—has most kindly copied it out from memory—for it has never before, she thinks, been written down.

It runs as follows:—

Come and I will sing you.
What will you sing me?
I will sing you twelve O!
What is your twelve O?
Twelve are the twelve Apostles.

Eleven of them have gone to Heaven,
Ten are the Ten Commandments,
Nine is the Moonlight bright and clear,
Eight are the eight Archangels,
Seven are the seven stars in the sky,
Six are the cheerful Waiters,
Five are the ferrymen in the boat,



THE GRAND INQUISITOR'S DRESS AS DESIGNED FOR THE ORIGINAL PRODUCTION OF "THE GONDOLIERS" IN 1889.

Four are the Gospel Preachers,
Three of them are strangers,
Two of them are lily-white maids,
Dressed all in green O!
One of them is all alone
And ever will remain so.

The way it is sung is:—

1ST SINGER:
"Come and I will sing you."

QUESTIONER (the same singer throughout):
"What will you sing me?"

1ST SINGER:
"I will sing you one O!"

QUESTIONER:
"What is your one O?"

1ST SINGER:
"One of them is all alone
And ever will remain so."

CHORUS:
"One of them is all alone
And ever will remain so."

2ND SINGER:
"Come and I will sing you."

QUESTIONER:
"What will you sing me?"

2ND SINGER:
"I will sing you two O!"

QUESTIONER:
"What is your two O?"

2ND SINGER:
"Two of them are lily-white maids
Dressed all in green O!"

CHORUS:
"One of them is all alone
And ever will remain so."

And so on throughout.

Now, it seems that there was an informal pact between W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan that when the former handed a libretto to the latter he should never give him any suggestion as to a rhythm or air which might be running in his head whilst writing it, lest it should throw out the other's musical inspiration set in motion by the verses.

When the "Merryman" song was handed to Sir Arthur, however, he declared that for a time it baffled him completely, and he finally went to Gilbert to ask if he could give him any clue as to his own source of



COL. FAIRFAX'S COSTUME IN THE PRESENT REVIVAL OF "THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD."

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inspiration on the chance that he could "dip a bucket in the same well!"

"I will give you one O!" chanted W. S. Gilbert, softly.

"I have it! Of course!" swiftly replied Arthur Sullivan, and the melodiously ingenious number which has held audiences spellbound in five continents was the result.

AT GRIM'S DYKE.

Some nine-and-twenty years ago the Gilberts moved to their beautiful house, Grim's Dyke, near Harrow, where they continued to entertain most hospitably, and here Lady Gilbert still lives.

It is a storehouse of treasures, many of which have a history connected with the operas, while the very arrangement of the rooms will often recall some whimsical Gilbertian jest or fancy! There is a charming alcove in the stairs leading from the billiard-room to a long drawing-room, scene in the old days of many a delightful dance, and this Sir William had fitted up with charming rose brocade-covered cushions and softly-shaded lamps, and quaintly dubbed "*The Flirtorium!*"

As quite a young man, W. S. Gilbert served for a short time in the Royal Naval Reserve, and later he owned a yacht in which he and his wife cruised about for seven successive summers, and the keen love of the sea which so constantly peeps out in his work was only equalled by his acquaintance with all seafaring lore. His knowledge of ships and shipping astonished even sailors.

In complicated rigging he took special delight, and one of the greatest treasures at Grim's Dyke is a fifteen-foot-long model of the old *Queen*, who played her part in Nelson's day, from which the after-part of H.M.S. *Pinafore* was exactly copied for the first revival of the opera. It is still kept in perfect order by the Rigging Expert of the Admiralty Museum at Whitehall, Mr. John Smith, who last year spent his three weeks' summer holiday at Grim's Dyke, working several hours a day upon this beautiful piece of handicraft, which—standing in the hall—is an object of much interest to visitors, who seldom fail to ask its history. In the billiard-room—the walls of which are lined with large black frames containing portraits of the original members of the casts of the first productions of the operas, one also sees the Headsman's Block and Axe used in the first production of "The Yeomen of the Guard," and the huge gong used in the same play, which, when struck, rings for four minutes, while the original drawings made to illustrate the "Bab Ballads" hang in long narrow frames on either side of the wide window.



SKETCH FOR THE DRESSES OF THE MAJOR-GENERAL'S DAUGHTERS IN THE PRESENT PRODUCTION OF "THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE."

At a time when Limericks were in the air, a group of young people seated on the lawn were quoting them to one another while awaiting tea, when, just as the tea-kettle and tray of cakes appeared, Sir William neatly interposed with the following:—

There was a young lady of Gilham,
Who sat down to tea by Sir Willum.
She said "We're not Mummies,
We've all of us Tummies,
AND NOW IS THE MOMENT TO FILL 'EM!"

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A TALE TO TELL

A BOXING STORY

By HYLTON CLEAVER

Illustrated by J·H·THORPE

I.

A SHRIVELLED old man wrapped in a great-coat and a woollen muffler sat in a high-backed chair beside his cottage door, and a teardrop was slowly rolling its way down either cheek. After a little while his thin lips suddenly tightened in pitiful distress and he lifted his stick vexatiously and brought it down again with a crack upon the ground. And then he began to mutter wearily to himself :—

"Oh, the pity of it! Nobody ever *believes*. Nobody *ever* believes, and you could have *shown* them."

A young man suddenly appearing from an outhouse stopped to cast an inquisitive glance at him. He was a fellow of powerful build, six-foot-two in his boots, but his look was somehow not quite that of the country and not quite that of the town. It was, if anything, the look of a man who has lived too long alone and who, as a consequence, is not quite as other men. His eyes were listless, and there was at that moment the silly kind of smile at his lips that one associates with the mentally deficient.

At last he put down the carpet bag he was carrying and came to the old man's chair.

"What are you crying for?"

The old man pointed petulantly to the paper on the ground.

"You've seen, 'aven't you? Don't you ever *read* the news? John Crockett is champion of England. He won the belt last night. *I* might have been the father of the champion heavy-weight of England, and instead—to the end of my days I shall always have to get up and cook my own breakfast.

"The pity of it," he said again. "The pity of it. Nobody will ever believe. The folk in London will never know that my son was the only man who ever beat John Crockett."

He turned and shook his stick threateningly.

"You might have been champion of England," he cried, in sudden desperation, "and, instead, you're only the village carpenter."

The young man looked at him once and lifted a warning finger; then he glanced up at the windows of cottages round about as if in fear that somebody would be looking out, and thinking it all a very fine joke. But this was not so, and accordingly he shook his head and looked down again quizzically at the old man.

"You mustn't cry like that," he said at last. "Don't you know that's very naughty? Someone'll see you."

"I *will* cry," snapped the old man. "It's something to cry *about*. *I* wanted to be the father of a champion like Peter Crockett."

The young man gave a whimsical smile and felt in his pocket. Finally he produced a shilling.

"You get old Solly to drive you into Packton this afternoon. And here's a shilling. You get yourself some sweets and go to the pictures."

He turned away and, picking up his carpet bag, went slowly out of the kitchen-garden through a little gate and out into the road. He did not bid good-bye to the old man, but he glanced at him once with his odd, lop-sided smile, then started off towards the village. As he went all kinds of people called to him teasingly from shop doorways and the windows of houses. They all had something funny to say about the championship of England, and all of them waved a morning paper, and to some he tossed his head with a sheepish grin, whilst those who met him in the street and laid hold of him, he shook off with a kind of good-humoured impatience, and so in the end he came to the shed of corrugated iron that was his workshop, opened the door with a key, and went inside.

He was alone at last. He sat down on a bench and rested his elbows upon his knees, and there he stayed for longer than you might think, with his head propped in his hands like the new boy at a school who is weary to death of teasing.

Long after he was left alone the old man still sat sorrowfully outside his cottage, looking uncertainly at the shilling and drying his tears with the back of his hand, and every time anyone passed along the road he looked up with a challenging stare. None of those who passed by stayed to speak with him,

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but he knew very well what everybody who looked his way would be thinking, and in the evening, when he made his way to the Gardeners' Arms, and they sat round about him with their pots of beer, he expected that they would find the courage in one another's presence to say it, just as they had the evening before :—

"What, Davy's boy beat our John Crockett? William? Why, William couldn't beat an egg!"

So he was sitting, a disappointed, lonely figure, when he was suddenly conscious of being watched, and he turned his head to where a steep grassy slope led down from the church towards his garden, and on the top of the slope, as if he had just come through the village graveyard, he saw a man.

He was a little man, and for a while he did not speak. He merely looked, and the old man looked back at him. At last the stranger began to come toward him, and the old man saw that he was holding a little quill toothpick between his teeth, and moving it this way and that with his tongue, much as a man chews gum. He had rather the cut of a racecourse tout of some respectability, but he held himself stiffly erect as he came towards Davy with his hands deep in the pockets of his overcoat.

"So this," said he, moving his toothpick to one side of his mouth and speaking with the other, "this little village here is where John Crockett was born and bred?"

Davy looked at him with a tear-stained countenance and was silent. The little man spoke again.

"What did they feed him on?"

"I can't hear properly what you say," Davy complained. "I'm 'ard of 'earing."

"I say," repeated the other, "that I am interested to know that this is the village where John Crockett was born and bred."

The old man heard this time.

"That's nothing," he answered, passionately. "The only man who ever *beat* John Crockett lives in this *house!*"

He had half risen out of his chair with eagerness. To his astonishment the stranger showed no extreme surprise.

"I'll come a bit nearer," said he. "Unless I am very much mistaken, I'm wanting to talk to you."

He came into the garden, glancing keenly at the cottage.

"It isn't very big," said he at last. "Is he *in?*"

The old man explained, and meanwhile the stranger settled himself upon a barrel.

"This man who beat John Crockett?" he began. "Can you tell me who he is?"

The old man began to quiver with excitement.

"It's *my* own boy," he said, with an emphatic gesture. "Nobody here will ever believe me. But it's true. It's true. William Saxby. *He* beat John Crockett."

The other's keen eyes never left his face. They were eyes like gimlets, and they bored their way deep into the old man's soul and found it honest. He spoke quietly but with peculiar insistence.

"When did he beat him?"

A queer look of anxiety came over Davy's face. This was the question they always asked him, and when he had answered them they always looked at him with a kind of pitying amusement, waited a moment, made some silly teasing answer, and then went smiling upon their way. He knew just how it was going to be, and he began to stammer a little.

"They were at school together," he answered. "They are just of an age; and they fought one day in the lane there beside the church. I saw them *myself*. There was nobody else who dared to fight him. He was so quarrelsome—a bullying boy. But my boy *beat* him. I remember the way he fell. It must be twenty years ago. He fell on the back of his 'ead. And he wouldn't get up. My boy was never a one to boast and John Crockett would never admit it was true; but I *know*. I *saw* it. It *is* true."

His voice had grown suddenly strong with excitement, and now he looked up in expectation of the other's smile.

"But," he would say, "that's twenty years ago. John Crockett hadn't begun to box. He——"

Davy sat for a moment stiff with wonder and a depth of gratitude. The little man was not laughing. He had cocked one eye interestedly; otherwise his keen eyes were still fixed on the old man's face. He believed!

For a moment the silence held. The old man longed to speak on. There was something more to tell, and he would have to keep it back. His hands twitched restlessly upon his lap. His eyes were ablaze with pride and satisfaction. And then at last the little man made a gesture of puzzled recollection and spoke: "But there was something else. That isn't all. He——"

The old man nearly bounded out of his seat. The truth of it all was on the tip of his tongue, and to have to keep silence was almost more than he could bear.

"There is! There is!" he cried. "You *know? How* do you know?"

"I don't know," said the other, "I only guess. But there must be. A man at the Flower Pot Inn has told me that much. But I wanted to hear the truth—and all of it—from you."

The old man sank back into his chair. At

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"'THIS MAN WHO BEAT JOHN CROCKETT?' HE BEGAN. 'CAN YOU TELL ME WHO HE IS?' 'IT'S MY OWN BOY,' SAID THE OLD MAN."

last he looked up from under his furrowed brow.

"You are a stranger here?"

"Yes."

The old man paused, and at last he looked up again.

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"I have promised my son never to let the tale get about the village. If I tell you, will you keep the secret?"

"I promise," said the little man.

Davy leaned forward. The forefinger of his right hand came out stiff and straight until it was pointing towards the other's waistcoat.

"They fought again," he said, in a hushed voice. "Down in the hollow—all alone—scarcely six years ago. Crockett came back to the village with a reputation. Something happened. My William followed him into the hollow and brought him to bay. They fought for a half an hour. Nobody knew. Nobody saw it but me, and I was down there smoking my evening pipe." The old man's voice began to rise excitedly.

"It was bare fists. For a half an hour Peter Crockett's boy laid into my William. William stood up to him. Time after time he hit William crash on the point of the jaw and William never fell. And then in the very end, when they had fought toe to toe for the half of an hour, William drew back, and as Crockett came in to hit him again William let out one great blow with every atom of his strength, and it took John bang on the side of the ear, so that he fell like a knackered 'orse, and lay there, and couldn't get up. Then William bent over him an' I saw him speak his mind, and at last he came away and indoors here for a wash, and when John Crockett was able he got up an' went his own way back; and in the morning, of course, he was gone. I came in later myself, and William turned to me suspicious-like.

"'Where have you been?' says he.

"I couldn't hold my tongue, and I went up to him and laid my hand on his arm and I says: 'Oh, William, you've beat John Crockett again. You've beat him fair and square. Mebbe they will believe me now after all'; an' I give him a smile. With that he turns to me. 'You keep your silence, father,' says he. 'Never one word of what you have seen this day do you breathe to a soul in all the village. This thing is my secret. If you don't want me to go staring mad, never mention this fight from this day on. Until to-day I never knew my strength. And if a man in the village ever gets to hear so much as a whisper of it, from that day on you never see me again as long as I live.'"

Davy stopped. He was breathless. The other man was still looking at him fixedly.

"And now," said he, "John Crockett has climbed. To-day he is the champion of England. Could your boy beat him again?"

"Surely, surely," answered the old man. "He has beaten him twice. Crockett could never hurt him. He could never knock him so much as off his feet. And when it came to his turn to hit, why, only once has he known his real strength, and then he knocked Crockett out."

"It's right," said the little man, nodding his head. "It's right enough. No other man has ever beaten Crockett, but he was a man John Crockett couldn't hurt." He reached out and laid both hands on Davy's arms. "It's true. I know it because John Crockett knows it, and Crockett is afraid."

The old man's eyes were wide and sparkling with the fervour of his great ambition. "If he would only fight again!" said he. "In a ring in London, for all the folk to see. If John Crockett would face him again then the folk here in the village would *know*. They'd have to believe me in the end, and I'd be the proudest man alive. But," he added, wearily, "William would never do it. All the pleasure of life has gone out of William. To the end of his days he'll just go on carpentering here in the village; and some of them do say that he isn't—all there. *I* might have been the father of the champion of England instead of old Peter Crockett—but William doesn't care."

"Why do they say he isn't—all there?" demanded the little man.

Davy spread his hands feebly.

"Ever since that day in the hollow, he hasn't been quite like other men. He seems too much alone. He makes no friends. He mixes with no folk in the village. It's just as if something had gone crack in his head after that fight, and he ain't never been right since then."

"Tell me," said the other. "Why did he fight?"

The old man glanced at him thoughtfully.

"I——" he began, and stopped. He leaned forward again and began to whisper: "You must keep your promise. No one must ever know. But you see when Crockett came back to the village with a reputation he stole away a little slip of a girl from William. Nobody here knew that. William pretended he didn't care a snap of the fingers. For a little while he laughed and sang, and nobody thought another thing about it. But after a while he began to change. And now he only smiles on one side of his mouth whenever you look at him. It's as if he had made up his mind that he'd got to keep on smiling whatever happened, and it's got into a habit."

"You say that nothing would ever make him fight again?"

Davy shook his head sadly. "William doesn't care."

The little man rose. "Do you ever see London papers down in this part of the world?"

"Just now and again when strangers come, but we——"

The stranger held out his hand.

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"I'm going to speak to your William," said he. "I wish you good-bye. I shall see you again." He paused. "I'm staying," he added, shamefacedly, "at the Flower-Pot. It seemed to be the only place. And before I go back I shall see you again."

II.

THE little man went away down the village street, biting upon his toothpick and looking from side to side almost as if in fear of omitting to notice some salute, and twice on the way he stopped for a minute to speak to a villager, and the question he asked of each was the same, just as if he were trying to gauge the real position of things here in the village. "Is it true there's a man amongst you who can beat John Crockett?" And each looked back at him with a slow sort of smile and said, as he shook his head: "Oh, that's old *Davy's* story. He'd have us *think* so. But you don't get two men like our John Crockett springing up in the self-same village, you know. Davy's old, you see; and his boy William—well, he ain't like other men."

So he passed on, and at last he came to the shed of corrugated iron and knocked peremptorily upon the door. It was opened slowly, and when he saw William in the flesh at last the little man stood for a while gazing at him intently before he spoke. And then he said:—

"May I come in?"

William drew back suspiciously and let him pass, turned after him, and came to his bench and stood there, leaning upon it with that set, peculiar smirk, waiting for the other to speak. The little man set his eyes dourly upon the other's face, thrust his hands deeper into the pockets of his long blue ulster, shifted his toothpick to one side of his mouth, and began:—

"I want to know if anything at all would persuade you to come to London and fight John Crockett?"

William leaned slowly forward and looked the little man through and through from under his shaggy eyebrows, and at last he answered in a queer, dull monotone:—

"What do you mean?"

"Would nothing persuade you to come?" the little man said again. "Money?"

William made no answer. He only stared and stared at the little man as if he were striving his uttermost to think who ever he could be.

"You don't see the London papers here," the little man said at last, "so I guess you won't have seen this. I want you to look at it."

It was folded so as to show a photograph, and it was the photograph of a girl. William looked at it for a moment uncomprehendingly, and then he glanced at the letterpress beneath, and read what it said:—

"THE CHARMING LADY WHO PRESIDES OVER JOHN CROCKETT'S HOME. JOHN SAYS THAT HER TENDER CARE IS THE CHIEF FACTOR IN HIS TRAINING."

He read it twice, and then he looked up again at the photograph, and stared at it until he had looked his fill, and then he put the paper down gently upon the bench and turned to the little man.

"What has that got to do with me? Why do you show me this?"

He spoke boldly enough, but his manner was unconvincing. The little man made a gesture.

"I'm not come to flick you on the raw," he answered, shortly. "I know what it means to you. But I want you to think back into the past." He rested both hands upon a table and leaned well forward over it as he spoke, and his voice never broke or wavered.

"That night you fought in the hollow—you gave John Crockett a warning. You told him to take the girl and marry her and make her happy, and you said that if ever you got to know that he had broken his holy word, if ever he caused her harm in any shape or any form, you would follow him to the ends of the earth and take your vengeance."

William had stiffened in every sinew, and now he stood bolt upright with his hands ready at his side as if he would fling himself upon the little man and choke out his life. He tried to speak, but only deep, half-formed sounds would come. The stranger waited, and at last he caught the words that William was trying to speak and knew that it was the natural question.

"I know," he answered, "because John Crockett told me; and John Crockett is afraid. Look at that picture again. You understand? It is the only one of its kind that was ever published, and I guessed you wouldn't have seen it. John Crockett tried to stop the issue. You see what it means? *That* girl is not his wife at all."

William stood staring before him fiercely. Lost memories long locked in his heart were coming back to him again. At last he looked up and spread his hands appealingly.

"Where is she?"

"Lucy? He left her. He sometimes sends her a little money. Sometimes he doesn't. She is alone in the world. Too proud, you know, to go to the law, and still too unused to the world to know quite what to do."

William came one step nearer and thumped the table with his fist.

"For God's sake tell me—how do you

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know all this? Where have you come from? Who are you? What does it all mean?"

"I know because I was Crockett's trainer. All the time he was climbing I watched over him. I taught him the game. I fixed his fights. While I was with him he never lost. And when he got to the top of the tree, before he fixed up last night's big match, he turned me down. I was his best friend in the game. He sent me away."

"Why?"

"Because of the little girl. He left his wedded wife alone in London with barely a friend in the world. God knows what harm may come her way. He left her. I gave him my mind straight from the shoulder. It took me twenty minutes, and then at the end he turned on me. 'You can go too,' he said. 'You can get.' I wasn't right for argument and so I went. And when last night came I couldn't bear to stay in London, and I made up my mind to come down here and find you." He began to speak now with unexpected power. "He's won the championship of England. His head's too swelled to look towards the girl he took away from you. I want you to fight him and beat him down to where he was before. That might save the day. If you don't hurry it may be too late. Sometimes I've seen her. I've lent her money at times when she's had none. But one of these days she'll disappear. She'll have gone in the night, and no one on God's earth will ever know where. We'll never find her again as long as we live. If we could beat John Crockett down, if he became a kind of fallen idol, I think that the girl he's with would leave him. She's that kind; and he might remember that Lucy wasn't, and then, maybe, go back to her."

William had listened like a man awakening from a dream, and now he turned.

"You say John Crockett told you of me?"

"It was one day when his nerve was beginning to go before a fight. It was the first time I'd ever seen him frightened, and I said so. He said: 'I'm not frightened. There's only one thing in all my life that frightens me, and that's a man who doesn't know his own infernal strength—a man you can't hurt. I fought a man like that once'—and then he told me. Afterwards when I looked back I got to understand that it must have been on that day that he was finally making up his mind to shake off the little girl, and he must have been remembering your warning. That's why I came last night. While he was fighting for the belt I came down here to tell you that the day has come, and that you've got to take your vengeance."

William turned again, and the little man could see that his queer lop-sided smile had vanished. His jaw was squarely set. It was as though he had reached down again the mantle of his manhood and was buckling it now about him to be his armour.

Davy was sitting just as before in his high-backed chair beside the cottage door when the little man came down the road again and stopped at his garden gate. When he reached the old man's chair he stopped and began to speak jerkily.

"You must say nothing. You must let nobody know. To get your boy into the ring against the champion of England is the hardest thing a man could have set himself to do. I can't quite see the way even yet. It shall be done, but I don't quite know how. If Crockett knows he will never meet him, and unless your boy could prove his grit or get his backing by beating a handful of other men first, there isn't a man in London who would stage the fight." He paused. The old man was looking at him earnestly.

"You mean that William is willing? You mean that he is going to fight?"

The little man waved him to silence with his hand.

"You must know absolutely nothing," he said. "You must be as silent as the grave. Never speak of it till I come again. There must be a way to fix this up and I shall find it. There isn't an hour to lose. I wish you good-bye. You shall see me again."

Davy interrupted pleadingly. "Tell me," said he. "You think he can win? You think he can knock John Crockett out?"

"I might not think so," said the little man, "if I didn't know John Crockett inside out. Crockett's frightened of your boy, and that's half the battle." He reached down suddenly and patted the old man on the shoulder.

"My name's Buck," said he, "and if there's a man in London who can fix up this fight, I shall be able to find a way."

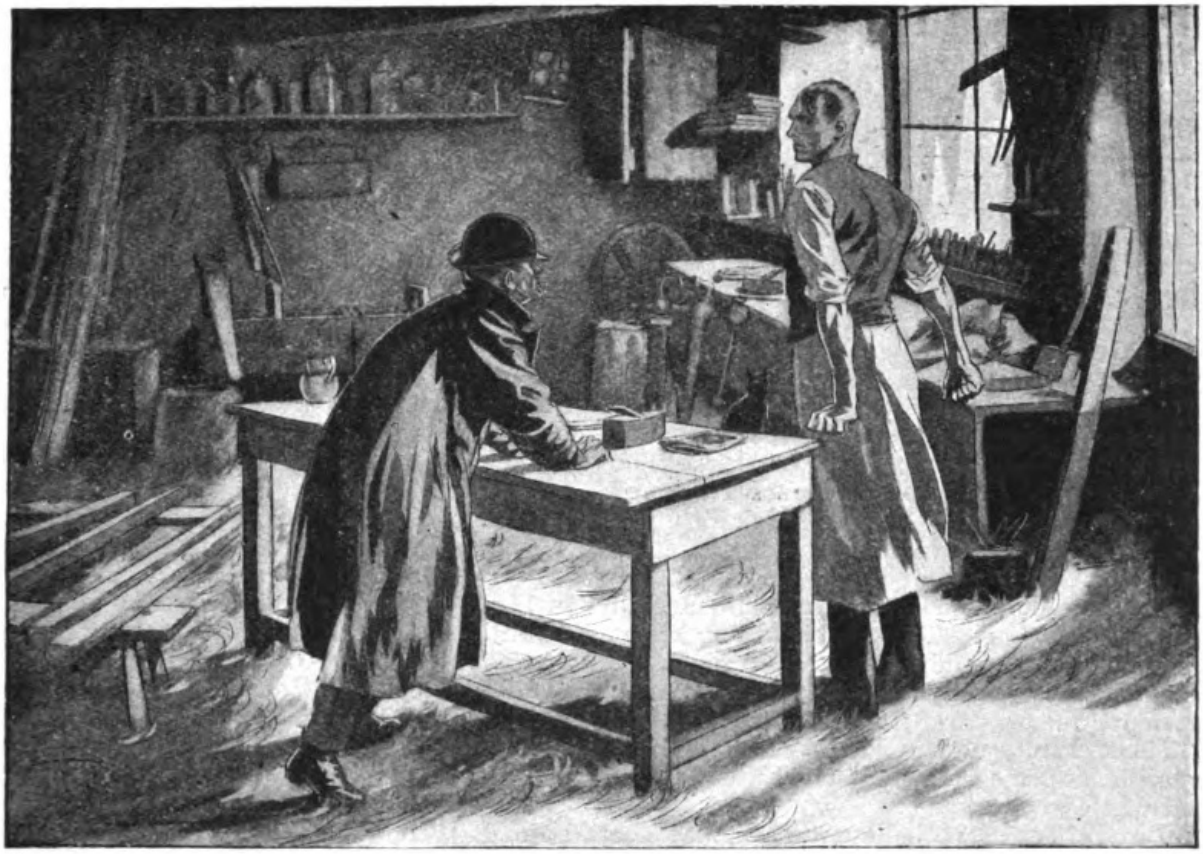
And when he had gone the old man leaned prayerfully forward and began to weep once again, but now they were tears, not of disappointment, but of untold happiness, for somebody at the end of his life had believed his tale at last.

III.

A MAN stood with his hands upon the ropes of the ringside, speaking. Wherever he looked, men were gazing intently towards him, or sat with heads turned sideways the better to hear his words.

They had stared from one to the other of the two men who had entered the ring and could come to no decision. The idea that the unknown challenger of Crockett would turn out to be some well-known amateur or a pugilist from the provinces had been

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"WILLIAM STOOD BOLT UPRIGHT WITH HIS HANDS READY AT HIS SIDE AS IF HE WOULD FLING HIMSELF UPON THE LITTLE MAN AND CHOKE OUT HIS LIFE."

disproved. No one could recognize the strange man who sat so stiffly still in his corner, looking neither to right nor left, but only at the man whom he had come to fight. One who might, had be been in the stranger's corner, have given a solitary clue—Buck, the man who, they knew, had once been Crockett's trainer—was sitting quietly out of the limelight, a very ordinary member of the audience, chewing his toothpick. Clearly he had had nothing to do with the making of this match. But in spite of his set eyes, Buck's mind was only half attentive. Mere snatches of what the man at the ring was saying were coming to him.

"For this man Sir James Brock stands sponsor—the whole of the purse to the winner—twenty rounds—John Crockett—Sir James's Unknown."

He had moved away out of the ring. The man who sat beside the gong was bending intently over his watch. Then, suddenly breaking the stillness, there sounded a sharp voice of peculiar penetration. It said, "Sit down there, *please!*" Here and there men turned their heads to look. An old man had half risen out of his seat. He wore a faded muffler knotted around his neck. His eyes were very bright, and his thin cheeks were pale with sheer excitement. His hand was uplifted as if in token of loyalty to the Unknown challenger. His lips had framed some word of approbation that was never spoken. At the sound of that voice of wrath behind him he turned his head, and as he subsided regretfully into his chair the bell rang at the ringside, and he began to crane his neck for a better view, his two hands gripping at his knees, whilst all the time his eyes were set glaringly upon John Crockett, who had only become aware that evening that the man he had got to meet was William. Crockett was moving out of his corner with the lithe tread of a softly-moving animal, and he was waiting with his gloves up for the challenger's first move. William stood squarely. He had no apparent guard, but his gloves were ready, and in the light of the arc-lamps the line of his jaw seemed strangely square-cut and his countenance oddly lacking in any expression save that of self-control.

Suddenly they were fighting. Just as when six years ago they had fought with bare fists down in the hollow, so now Crockett was on top of William again. He was coming in all the time, making the utmost use of his reach, his long legs far apart, and his shoulders swinging slowly as he looked for his openings, and each time that he hit every muscle in his body seemed to tighten with the strength of the blow. At first William could stop

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them. He kept his hands for this and for this alone, and scarcely once in the first round did he try to hit back. He just kept moving steadily before John Crockett, catching his blows on the arm or the elbow, and sometimes unflinchingly in the face, and never giving way. And as time went on it suddenly became apparent that all the time he was moving he was gradually making Crockett draw back towards the ropes.

Progress this way was slow, for Crockett kept darting forward again and hitting out, and yet between whiles he was always withdrawing as if in anxiety to keep away from the threatening violence of those two clenched fists. He was at the ropes at last. The little man in his inconspicuous seat leaned slowly forward and his toothpick dropped unheeded from his mouth.

It seemed that the silence grew suddenly more profound, as if the air were stilled with quick foreboding. There was uncanny intent in William's watchfulness. Crockett made one bound to escape the blow that was surely coming, and was free; and at that moment "Time" came, suddenly, and William walked placidly to his corner with never a change in his whole expression.

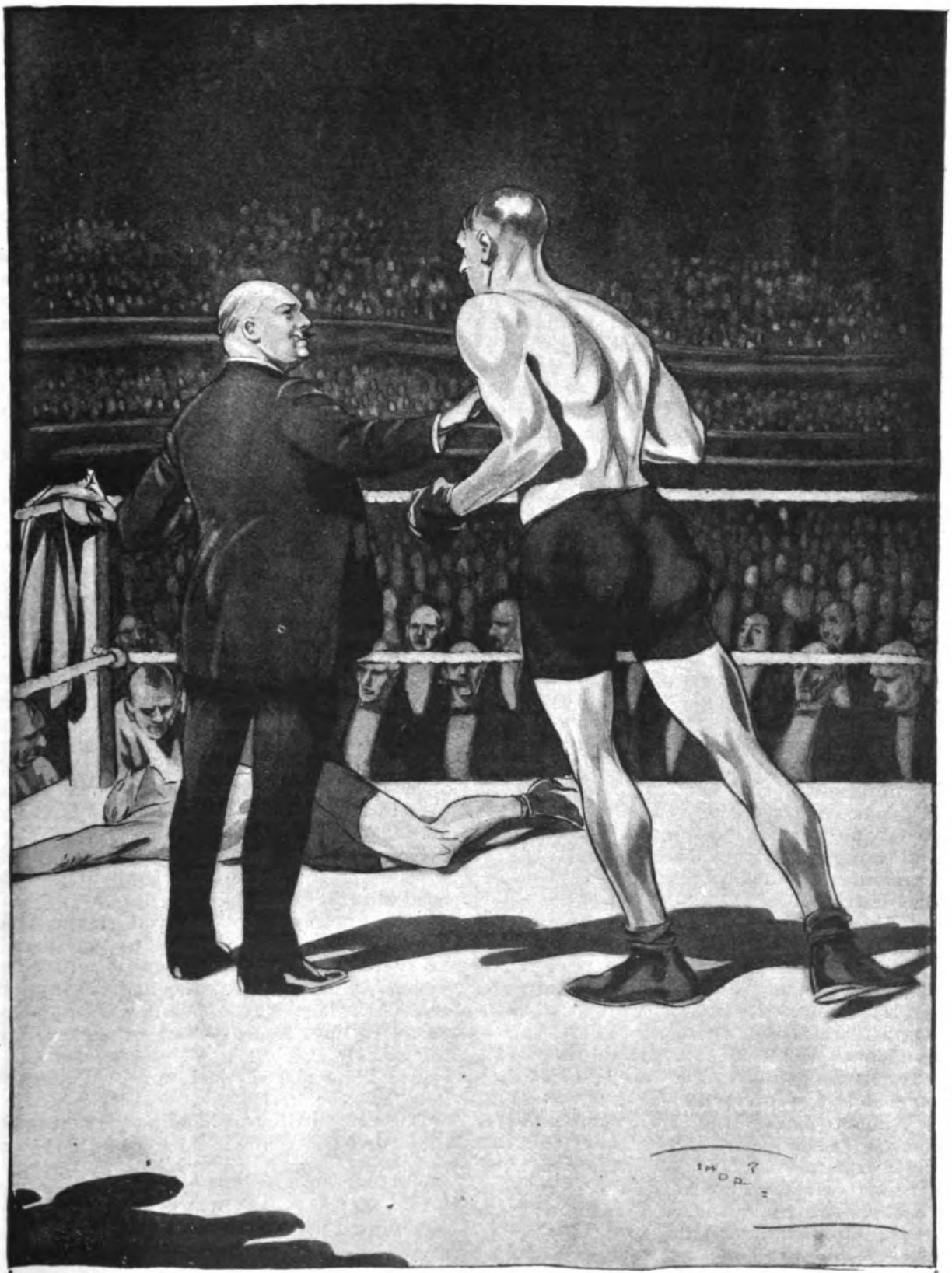
But in his heart he knew now that the little man had been right. The idea that William had come at last to take his revenge was playing on Crockett's nerves, and Crockett was afraid.

He suffered them patiently whilst they bathed his face, and at the call for the second round he stood up and lifted his hands. Now the champion began to hit with greater frequency and greater violence. A blow crashed into William's face and seemed to rock him upon his feet; yet when men came to look again he was still pressing the other towards the ropes almost by strength of will alone, unaware of the trickle of blood winding its way downward from his eye.

There was one moment when the world stood still, and Crockett's right shot up from his hip, thudded up under William's chin, and stiffened him to his full height with the force of its landing; but William just shook his head once as if to clear his brain, settled back into his watchful poise, and started to regain lost ground towards the ropes. His first blow came unexpectedly. Crockett's face was bare and unprotected right within reach of his hand. He drew back and swung forward again, whilst his glove shot out on the end of his great arm and hit that hated face as if it would flatten the contour of it for all time. Crockett swayed backwards, and then recovered with an effort, and jumped aside as another blow followed on. But now William had changed to a live man. He took one stride towards the other and feinted with his right. Crockett ducked, and came up again in time to hit him under the chin. It had no effect. William went on. He had his man against the ropes at last. He drew him with another feint. Crockett's guard dropped. The challenger moved for his blow. Then, just as before, the bell rang, and he turned with a touch of apathy and was done. But "Time" for the third round brought him out of his corner with a stride, and this time he met John Crockett with ready hands moving at his side. A blow crashed into William's face and made no difference at all. He just went on into his man, though when they could see his face the old man Davy and the little man Buck could see that he was bleeding badly. He hit out suddenly, but missed. Crockett came up again and landed just as before under the chin. William tried to hit back, but his man was out of reach. Another blow came at him instead, and he met it clumsily with his face. Blood was blinding him. He shook his head and looked for Crockett. Crockett loomed up suddenly before him with a new smile on his hated face; then William drew back. If Crockett beat him to-day the warning that he had given would become a joke. Unless he could send his man rocking to the floor again and again until his insufferable conceit was finally shattered, it would have been better for Lucy that he had never come out of his loneliness at all.

As Crockett came at him again he stepped in and drove at him, first with one hand, then with the other. This time he landed thudding blows, and Crockett went back again towards the ropes. He followed quickly. Crockett tried to jump out and escape, but as he jumped William hit him again and sent him back. For the third time William got ready. Crockett saw it coming and shot out quick blows one after the other in despair. They landed on William's face, and he stood there grimly letting them come, waiting until they should have ceased and he could see Crockett clearly once again. He would not give way. He would not go down. Crockett was swinging forward between the rallies and striving to force his way out. It was useless. At last he stopped for one brief moment, and William blinked his eyes and dourly shook his head. Then he saw Crockett, and as he began to hit out again William found his strength at last. Sudden great hatred welled up within him; through these three rounds he had waited bravely for that strength of the devil to fire his being as it had fired it that other night down in the hollow. He knew now that it had come. Crockett should hit him no more. He saw Crockett's glove shooting

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"SOMEBODY—THE REFEREE—CRIED TO HIM: 'STAND BACK!' THE TIMEKEEPER HAD COUNTED THE SECONDS. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT CROCKETT WAS OUT."

towards him, and before it ever landed he countered with a great punch from the shoulder. Then he took one fierce look, saw Crockett against the ropes, dazed and for a moment unguarded. In that second he summoned all his might and threw himself

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into the greatness of one blow. It was a great drive and a straight one, with the strengh of four men in its weight. It took Crockett on the side of the chin. Crockett threw up his hands and began to fall sideways. With a superhuman effort he half recovered and stood straight for a moment, lifting his hand subconsciously to hit. William clenched his teeth and hit him once more, and finally.

Crockett stood for one second stiffly upright, with glazing eyes. The colour had gone from his cheeks and left them blanched. His heels were close together, and as he fell they never parted. His knees were stiff, and they stayed stiff. He fell like a log, hitting the boards, so it seemed, with the whole of his body at once, like a falling pillar, and lay there stark upon the floor with his hands doubled under him, his eyes wide open, staring.

Only once had William seen a man look quite like that before in all his life. That man had been dead. He moved forward like a somnambulist and leaned over Crockett.

Somebody—the referee—cried to him: "Stand back!"

He would not stand back. Something impelled him on. He began to wrestle with his gloves, trying to free one hand. He did not hear the shouting and the cheers. The small shrill voice of an old man who had jumped upon his chair and was waving to him in a frenzy never reached his ears.

The timekeeper had counted the seconds. He understood that Crockett was out. At last one of his hands was free. He felt somebody tugging him towards his corner, and struggled out of his grasp. Then he knelt over John Crockett, passed a hand over him. At last he looked up.

"This man——" he began. He wanted to say that Crockett was dead. The words would not come. He could only point. He saw them trying to lift John Crockett up. At last they were making way for a man who had climbed into the ring from below—a doctor. He was looking into Crockett's face, touching his eyes, feeling his wrists; he had turned to those near him.

William looked round for someone he knew. There was no one. He was alone.

He had met Crockett without a word of greeting of any kind. He wondered if Crockett had really been afraid. Since that day in the hollow no single word had ever passed between them; but each in his heart had known and had remembered. Now he had killed Crockett with his fist.

He turned to them. He wanted to say: "God knows—he had his warning," but no words would come. The blood was still trickling down his face. His hands were shaking a little.

A man came across to him.

"You've killed him," he said. "I'm afraid we shall have to keep you here. The police will want you."

Davy sat on the carved oak bench before the glowing fire of the Gardeners' Arms. The village men who had laughed at him for twenty years were clustered about him in a group, their mouths agape. And they listened to the old man's story.

He came to the end of the tale of that great fight almost unwillingly, but nevertheless working nobly to a finish and winding up on a high-pitched note of dramatic emphasis.

"You laughed at my boy; and he fought," he added, after a moment. "He only fought that once, and he will never fight again as long as he lives. But the only time he did fight in a London ring he met the champion of England, and killed him."

He sat back. None of *them* had seen the fight.

Peter Crockett had not come back from London. Rumour said that he was never coming back; that he wanted to keep away from the village that was filled with memories of his son, and that he would stay in London. Only Davy could tell the true tale of that amazing night. It was the best tale that anyone in all the village had ever had to tell; and it was a true one. So long as he lived, their sons and their grandchildren would never tire of hearing it. To the end of his days now he would always have a tale to tell whenever they sat like this around the fireside.

He suddenly turned. A footstep had sounded at the door. The landlord put his head into the room.

"A gentleman to see you, Davy," he said. "He'd like to speak to you here." Davy rose and went in dignity across the room. In the dark of the hall he stopped and looked. A little man was standing there waiting, a little man who chewed a toothpick.

The little man looked up. "William is free," said he.

Davy reached out a hand and laid it upon the little fellow's arm.

"Free? Has he come?"

"He will come," answered Buck, "but to-day he has gone to find Lucy. And afterwards he will be bringing her down. I just came to tell you and to stay for a day or two, perhaps, amongst you here."

For a little while the old man made no answer. His mind seemed to be travelling back along the years.

At last he slowly nodded his head. "I could almost believe," said he, "that William had never let her go."

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Sir William Orpen, R.A., K.B.E.

("BILL" ORPEN).

The Great Painter of the Historic Picture

"The Signing of the Peace Treaty."

By SIDNEY DARK.

ONE morning I was discussing the perplexing character of President Wilson with an important member of the American peace delegation in Paris.

"He puzzles me as much as ever he did," said my friend. "I would give a great deal to solve the Wilson enigma. He is the mystery man of the modern world."

Everyone whose business it was to attend the long-drawn-out Peace Congress was intrigued in the same way. Indeed, the Peace Congress song was, "Who is Wilson, what is he?"

A few hours after the conversation to which I have referred, the mystery was, however, solved, for me at least. The business of the British Government during the Paris Congress was carried on in the Hôtel Astoria, a building most inconveniently situated near the Arc de Triomphe. One of the ground-floor rooms was temporarily turned into a studio and was the workroom of Major Sir William Orpen, R.A., K.B.E., one of the two official artists attached to the Congress. Major Augustus John was the other.



PRESIDENT WILSON.

"NOT ONLY THE FEATURES OF THE MAN, BUT HIS CHARACTER, STOOD OUT CLEAR FOR HIM WHO LOOKED TO READ."

For many weeks Sir William was busy, painting rapid portrait-studies of the Congress personalities for use in the great picture which is to be the historic record of the signing of the Second Treaty of Versailles.

On the afternoon of the day on which my American had deplored the fact that no man knew Wilson, the President of the United States gave Orpen a one hour's sitting, the first of three. He arrived precisely at two, surrounded as always by a bodyguard of detectives, and left precisely at three.

A few minutes afterwards Orpen showed me his study. It was a marvellous sixty minutes' achievement. The painter had worked with brain and soul and muscle, and he was as weary as a sprint runner who has just won a race. But the real miracle was not the completeness of a picture painted so rapidly, but the fact that not only the features of the man but his character, with its strength and its limitations, stood out on the canvas, clear for him who looked to read. Orpen's keen eyes had pierced the mask. His picture told me what I had spent weeks of vain effort

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endeavouring to discover. Here was not only the explanation of President Wilson but the explanation of the Peace Congress.

Art (whatever else it may be) is the annotation of life. The artist writes the footnotes that help duller men to understand. The portrait-painter, if he be an artist (and many a successful portrait-painter is nothing of the sort), needs far more than technical skill. Mr. George Bernard Shaw once boasted that, almost alone among his contemporaries, he possesses a pair of eyes fixed straight in his head. That is a good deal, but not enough. Sir William Orpen has indeed a power that Sam Weller regretted was not his. If he cannot see through an oak door, he can see through a human forehead. The rest of us see eyes and noses and mouths, and we try, generally unsuccessfully, to deduce character from them. Orpen looks and sees (sometimes, very often, but not always) the complete man as he really is and as he generally wishes he wasn't. We see the man as the camera sees him—which is why we all like photographs. The artist sees the man as God sees him, and it is not infrequently hard for us to recognize the likeness.



THE MARQUESS SAIONJI.

"PERHAPS THE TRIUMPH OF ORPEN'S PEACE CONGRESS STUDIES IS THE PICTURE OF THE JAPANESE PRINCIPAL DELEGATE."

And then one arrives at this odd fact. The artist may paint better than he knows. He may tell us far more than he tells himself. He paints, for instance, a picture of Brown. We look at the picture and we see at once that Brown is a liar, and we are shocked at the discovery. We ask the artist if he is really sure that Brown is a liar, and he will probably say, "I don't know in the least whether he is a liar or not, but that is Brown as I see him!"

Since I saw the Wilson study I have been looking very curiously at Orpen's eyes. They are very steady and very sharp. They are rather uncomfortable eyes, and when he looks at you it is impossible not to wonder what he is seeing of your soul. Somehow most of us would hate to have our souls pulled out into the daylight. Not that Major Sir William Orpen, R.A., K.B.E., is at all an uncomfortable person. He is a cheery little Irishman, short, stiff-figured, utterly without a vestige of side, completely unspoiled by success. It is a joke to think of him as Major Sir William Orpen, etc., etc. No one in Paris who knew him ever dreamt of calling him anything but Bill, generally, by the way, with an affectionate colloquial adjective in front of it. The man himself actually is Bill Orpen. His name summarizes his character. There is no such person at all as Major Sir William Orpen, R.A., K.B.E., though it may please society chroniclers to believe that there is. From the financial point of view the fashionable portrait-painter is among the most enviable of mortals. Duchesses stand in queues on his doorstep. Millionaires dangle fat cheques before his eyes. I do not suggest that Orpen scorns the cheques (in this respect we are all men of like passions), but I do know that he neither cares nor even remembers if a woman is duchess or dairy-maid, or whether a man is peer or potman, when he begins to paint. They are all studies, and they either interest him or bore him. The consequence is that he paints dull (and very probably inexact) pictures of dull people, and exciting and illuminative pictures of people who are unusual, intriguing, and individual. Perhaps the triumph of his Peace Congress studies is the picture of the Marquess Saionji, the Japanese principal delegate. The beautiful, clear-cut, Buddhaesque immobility of the face is more than the revelation of the character of a man.

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It is the summary of the qualities, if not of a nation, of the class that has for centuries governed that nation. The picture tells the story of the Samurai. Another of the outstanding successes is the picture of General Botha. If I were to say which are the failures, I should be forced to speak evil of dignitaries.

Orpen joined the Army Service Corps early in the war as a second-lieutenant. After a while it occurred to somebody in authority that a great painter might be more usefully employed than in wasting his time as a sort of livery-stable clerk, and Orpen was sent to France to paint the war pictures that have since been exhibited in London. About one of these pictures, "The Spy," a thrilling fictional romance has been woven, but the truth is a typical Orpen story. While he was at the Front, the artist was specifically forbidden to paint any pictures that were unauthorized by his military chiefs. One day a pompous and very unintelligent colonel went through the canvases in Orpen's makeshift studio to see if this order was being strictly obeyed, and among them he found the study of a beautiful woman with bare head and naked shoulders. The colonel sent for Orpen and asked for an explanation, which Orpen (I have mentioned that he is Irish) at once supplied. A story was wanted and Orpen is not the man to fail. So he concocted a wondrous yarn of a beautiful Hungarian spy captured by the French, who, when she was taken out to be shot, suddenly threw off her cloak and stood, magnificently naked, before the firing squad, in order to move their susceptible hearts. The colonel was impressed but inquisitive. He demanded more details, and Orpen found himself landed in a coil. His model, a perfectly innocent French girl, was arrested. He himself narrowly escaped court-martial, but the spy story has become a war classic, which every American magazine has reprinted, and which will certainly appear in every popular war history. Thus has history ever been concocted by the imaginative.

During his war service he met, of course, all the great Army leaders, but the two soldiers he remembers best and of whom he loves most to talk are two boys in the Flying Corps, one about twenty and the other about twenty-two, with whom he became great friends, and who live in his mind as Tom and Fred. It is safe to add that when they were together the Royal Academician was the youngest and most irresponsible of the three. Anyhow, they soon dropped the Sir William, and it was Bill, with the affectionate adjective, for them. The two boys loved each other and were hardly ever apart. One night one of them said to the other, "Tom, I wish you'd recite." "No," said his friend; "I hate reciting because you always cry." "But I like crying," urged Fred. So Tom recited a most lugubrious poem and Fred cried happily all through the performance. The end of the story brings the tears into the artist's eyes. Tom and Fred were killed together on the same day! Those two boys will always be Orpen's chief memory of the war.



GENERAL BOTHA.

"ANOTHER OF ORPEN'S OUTSTANDING SUCCESSES IS THE PICTURE OF GENERAL BOTHA."

He is a strenuous worker, though, like many other strenuous workers, he may always appear to have lots of time for loafing. His Peace Congress picture will contain thirty-six portraits, each of them meaning three or four sittings, to say nothing of the studies of the Salle des Glaces, where the ceremony of the signing of the Treaty took place.

His Paris portraits are—President Wilson, Mr. Lloyd George,

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M. Clemenceau, Marshal Foch, Marshal Joffre, Field-Marshal Haig, Admiral Beatty, Admiral Wemyss, General Botha, Lord Hardinge, Lord Derby, the Marquess Saionji, M. Venizelos, Lord Reading, Sir Robert Borden, Mr. Barnes, Colonel Lawrence, the Emir Feisul, Sir Henry Wilson, the Maharajah of Bikanir, General Smuts, General De Wiart, Lord Robert Cecil, Colonel House, Sir John Ward, Lord Sumner, M. Hymans, Mr. Lansing, Señor Da Costa, General Sykes, Mr. Balfour, Mr. Hughes, General Diaz, General Pershing, Lord Milner, and Sir Maurice Hankey. In addition Orpen painted a masterly study of a picturesque attendant at the Polish Legation who, he declares, he discovered was really a Sinn Feiner from County Cork. The upper lip certainly supports the theory. The Americans wanted to buy the portrait of President Wilson for immediate shipment to Washington, and many of Orpen's other Congress sitters wanted to purchase their pictures. But the collection is an historic set that can hardly be broken. The artist has, however, had an invitation to go to America again to paint the President, and he has also been invited to become the official artist of the Portuguese Republic.



M. VENIZELOS.
A STRIKING PORTRAIT OF THE GREEK PATRIOT.

Orpen frequently began work long before the majority of delegates and correspondents were out of bed, and he frequently worked seven days a week. But the note of the man is to do everything that he has to do with all his heart and soul. His laugh is large and wholesome. He frivols with a will. No man is a more stimulating after-dinner companion. And this is all in accord with the fact that when his palette is in his hand he works with fierce concentration, his set face showing the determination that his fingers shall exactly obey his eyes and that his canvas shall tell all that his eyes see. Orpen is either all in his work or not in it at all. He can be (and generally is) supremely good. He can be bad. But mediocrity is foreign to his soul.

William Orpen was born in Dublin just over forty years ago. He tells you with a chuckle that in true Irish fashion he first studied in a Dublin art school, run by the Board of Agriculture. This school, by the way, has a public subsidy of eleven thousand pounds a year, while the Royal Hibernian Academy school has a subsidy of only three hundred a year. One feels that a Sinn Feiner would found some effective anti-Dublin Castle indictment on these odd facts. When Orpen left Dublin he studied at the Slade School in London, and he and Augustus John remain the Slade's two most famous pupils. Success came to him very early. His work found speedy recognition. He was an A.R.A. before he was thirty. He was elected an Academician before he was forty. Like many clever Irishmen, he has found England a kindly stepmother. But William Orpen is wholly and entirely Irish. He is no politician, but Douglas Hyde, the founder of the Gaelic League, from which the Sinn Fein movement really sprang, is his cousin, and George Moore was one of his nearest friends. Before the war he spent part of every year in Ireland, and, despite success and uncountable friends, he always will be an exile in England. Superficially Orpen has as little in common with what Bernard Shaw called the "leprechaun school" of Irish writers as Mr. Shaw himself. But under the brusque humour of his manner and the realism of his art there is hidden away something of the yearning, unsatisfiable sadness that characterizes one type of Irishman, and which is the note of so much recent Irish literature.

I discovered this fact about Orpen, discovered it with something of a shock, when I one day found two dainty little dreamers' poems lying on his studio desk.

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Another adventure of Omar and his companions, by the great new American humorist.

OMAR-FOUNTAIN of IDEAS

By FRANK CONDON

Illustrated by G·L STAMPA

THE three of us —Omar, Harmony, and I— were cast adrift in the town of Salinas, and of course we were in our usual condition of vehement financial distress, and, to make things more interesting, all three of us had taken a solemn vow to lead a life of serene honesty. Yes, sir; we had just decided to abjure a life of petty crime and to travel the thin path of rectitude. Reformed we were, and solidly anchored to the rock of righteousness. True, this did not actually begin within us, or at the behest of our consciences. Up in San Rafael, and about ten days before we struck Salinas, a large and inflamed body of informal citizens had talked it over with us, and had convinced us that there is nothing in a life of shame. It is further true that they did this talking while on the run, about seventy yards behind us, and late at night. The details are unimportant, but we were now three changed men, and, if anything, Harmony was changed the most. He longed to be an honest citizen. Omar also longed to be honest, but he worried a good deal about board and lodging.

Thus it was that we entered Salinas, as pure as the driven snow, and equally homeless. Joe Tait permitted us to loiter among his pool tables for a few days, and it was in this palace of amusement that I found Harmony and Omar curled up over a map of the Pacific Ocean, which they had spread out on the billiard table.

"Here's a funny thing, George," Harmony said, as I entered. "We're only forty miles from El Camino, and I know the mayor of that town. He used to be a cigarette salesman. Omar knows him too."

"Well," I asked, "what of it?"

"He's a good chap," Omar volunteered. 'He's reformed now, like us. His name is Mortimer Tukes."

They warmly pointed out El Camino to me, which at the moment was concealed in one of the corner pockets, and continued to talk of Mayor Tukes. I asked a few polite questions, and remarked that there seemed no reason to have a violent spasm because they both knew the mayor of a fourth-class coast town.

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"No," said Harmony, "there's no occasion for excitement, and yet the finger of opportunity beckons us toward El Camino. This town is one of the oldest in California and has been a summer resort for years, but it needs vigorous advertising. Let us go over there and hurl some ginger into the town, and, knowing the mayor as I do, we ought to get away to a friendly start."

The next morning we commandeered the back end of a fruit truck and rode over the mountains to El Camino, arriving there about noon. We located the office of his honour the mayor, walked in, and found that Mayor Tukes was a thin, sarcastic, hollow-faced man, surrounded by cigarette smoke and a discouraging manner. He seemed to be satisfied with El Camino as it lay. Harmony introduced us and called his honour's attention to the dim and distant days when he sold cigarettes. I could see that the city's executive, if he was overcome with a wild joy, was concealing it most skilfully.

"Well," said Mr. Tukes, "I do remember you vaguely. I can't recall the little man at all."

"Never mind that," Harmony continued, warming up to his work. "You see before you three live wires, and you need us in El Camino. There are millions of prospective customers who don't come here because they don't know about the town, and what you want is an outfit of hustlers to give this place the right publicity, whereupon you will do twice the business you did last year."

"You think you have the qualifications for such a job," said Mr. Tukes, in what I took to be a sardonic manner. "As I recall it, you were some kind of a crook."

"True," said Harmony, without rancour, "but I have reformed. George and Omar have reformed too. We are all honest now, and we mean to go on leading a life of spotless sobriety."

"El Camino," said Mayor Tukes, inhaling his cigarette, "requires no advertising. Its fame is extensive. People come here because they know the joys of our famous beaches, and to escape the hot, arid winds of the inland country. If we *did* need a publicity department, should I do right to employ three birds of passage, who, for all I know, may just have escaped from jail?"

"No," said Omar at this point. "We haven't been in jail at all. They missed us. And, anyhow, why be so finicky? They used to pinch you once a week back in St. Paul, when you ran that crooked business. When you weren't coming out of jail, you were going in, so why be particular?"

Mr. Tukes glared at Omar, and I could tell that the conversation was not getting us perceptibly nearer three good advertising jobs.

"You are mistaken," he said to Omar, who grinned cheerfully at him. "I hold a position of some dignity in this city, and it would ill befit me to consort with knights of the road. This town doesn't need advertising, anyhow. As you pass out of the office, close the door."

There ended our interview with the mayor of El Camino, and we filed slowly into the sunlit streets of the town. Late in the afternoon, with things looking very bleak indeed for three honest men, we put into a house of refreshment, and there we made the acquaintance of a large, hoarse, red-haired man wearing a white waistcoat, a purple hat, and a set of whiskers. He was in a genial mood, despite his ferocious appearance, and we learned that he was in El Camino on a visit. He was sitting in the middle of the taproom, entirely alone and entirely surrounded by glasses of mixed ale, into which he was thrusting a red-hot poker and enjoying the resultant hissing. We watched him at this curious pastime until he noticed us, whereupon he invited us cordially to sit in and blow the foam off a beaker.

Thus began our acquaintance with Mr. Augustus Peabody Ankerman, hotel proprietor, one of the very few persons I have known who could carry a couple of barrels of ale without showing the faintest effect.

"So you're looking for work, are you?" he asked, in what he regarded as a conversational tone, but which you could hear above the booming of a flood tide. "It may turn out lucky that you came in here and met me."

"Why so?" I asked.

"Well," he said, tracing curlicues with the iron poker on the table top, "I am the man who owns all the hotels in Pebble Beach, including the famous Golden Knoll."

"Is that so?" Omar put in, politely, this being his first remark, because the large man frightened him. "Where is Pebble Beach?"

"Where is Pebble Beach!" roared Mr. Ankerman. "Good Lord! Do you mean to tell me you never heard of Pebble Beach? Sufferin' cats!"

"He never heard of anything," Harmony said soothingly at this point to keep us from getting in worse. "Don't pay any attention to him. He was born in an orphanage."

The hotel man drank three indignant glasses without pausing and resumed discourse.

"I own every hotel in Pebble Beach, which is about fourteen miles down the coast from where we are now. For the benefit of your friend with the darkened intellect, I'll say that Pebble Beach is one of the finest summer resorts on the Pacific coast. We have two hundred bungalows, scattered along a shelving beach, and pine trees running down to the

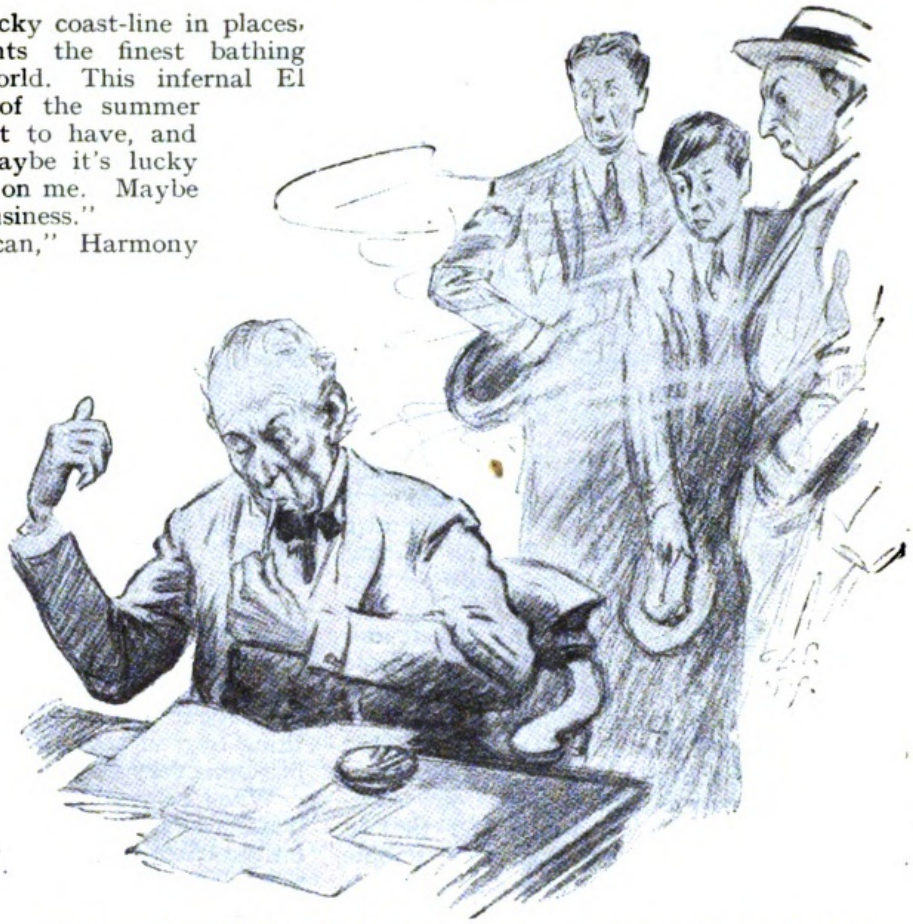
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sea. We have a rocky coast-line in places, and at other points the finest bathing facilities in the world. This infernal El Camino gets most of the summer trade that we ought to have, and that's why I say maybe it's lucky you walked in here on me. Maybe we can do a little business."

"No doubt we can," Harmony said, politely.

"What kind of advertising experts are you? What do you know about publicity? What can you do, assuming I gave you a job?"

About all Harmony ever needs to start him off is somebody to ask him a few leading questions, and for the next ten minutes Mr. Ankerman leaned back and listened, while our Mr. Childs told him how good we were at thinking up unusual and unique publicity schemes.



"THIS TOWN DOESN'T NEED ADVERTISING. AS YOU PASS OUT OF THE OFFICE, CLOSE THE DOOR!"

"Here's the way it is," Ankerman said, when Harmony ceased his eulogy. "Pebble Beach has always needed the right kind of publicity, and so far it hasn't got it, with the result that El Camino has run off with the summer trade. I'm willing to give you three birds a chance to show what you can do. I'll provide you with rooms at the Golden Knoll Hotel, where you will get your meals and lodging. Go ahead and show me what you can do. If you're the goods, I'll put you on the regular pay-roll. Is that fair, or not?"

We admitted that this seemed eminently fair, and then Mr. Ankerman invited us to have dinner with him in El Camino and later travel to Pebble Beach in his car.

"Didn't I tell you that honesty paid?" Harmony demanded of me on the quiet. "We're fixed for the summer."

"Can we make good?" I asked.

"Can a duck swim?" he replied, and we went in to eat with Mr. Ankerman.

We started to put Pebble Beach on the map, and for the next six weeks I worked harder than I had ever worked before. Harmony furnished ideas, and I furnished ideas, and Omar furnished what he took to be ideas, but which in reality were the insane ramblings of a mind that is soon going to disintegrate. We were supplied with one of those small frightened-looking typewriting machines weighing six pounds, and on it I wrote a lot of very fine lies about Pebble Beach. We procured a list of all the newspapers west of the Mississippi River and sent them daily messages concerning the frivolities of Pebble Beach and the expected activities during the coming summer. We also hooked on with a man who was employed by a Press Association and who agreed to send stuff to his papers.

I wrote interviews with famous people, including Chinese dignitaries, Japanese, and Hindus, together with an occasional prominent American. I saw to it that these personages stopped at the Golden Knoll, and they all said interesting things. Harmony came through with a story about a young woman whose father was a chemist and who used his own bath-tub for chemical experiments. The daughter took a bath in the tub and began to turn into marble. That story was printed in every paper in the United States.

Another one he thought up was about the

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old maid who lived in Pebble Beach and hired a messenger boy to catch flies for her tame lizard. This, too, secured wide circulation.

During all this hard work Omar Gill annoyed Harmony and me with his incessant importunities. He felt that he was being kept out of it, and he longed to kick in and take an active hand in the press-agenting, but we forbade him.

"You two are spoiling this," he said. "You're all right when it comes to crooked stuff, but now we're honest. I know more about how to work honest games than you do, because I'm naturally honest, and you're naturally crooked. Why don't you use some of my suggestions?"

"Because they're no good," Harmony said, frankly. "You're a natural-born fool and you'll never be anything else. George and I are running this business. You're getting your board and room, so what more do you want?"

That was quite true about his board and lodging. He was getting fat like one of those French horses, but he kept nagging at us until Harmony's patience began to wear down so you could see the nap.

To show you how useless Omar's suggestions were, he came bounding into our workroom with a story to the effect that a celebrated doctor now living in Pebble Beach had discovered that the salt water of Pebble Bay contained the precise ingredients needed to cure epilepsy. If we published that, wouldn't Pebble Beach have a nice summer, full of epileptics?

So we relieved him of all mental effort, and he went around Pebble Beach growling ferociously because we kept him from ruining our successful effort to remain honest and conduct a publicity enterprise. Toward the middle of June, Boss Ankerman, the demon hotel owner, admitted that Harmony and I had the goods.

"You boys are there, I'll say," he chuckled. "This publicity stuff is what we needed here. I'm getting inquiries about rooms from people as far east as Sioux City, and the advance bookings are growing day by day. I dunno but what I'd better put you lads on a regular salary."

"How much?" Harmony demanded.

"Oh—fifty dollars a week for you, and the same for George. How would that hit you, starting about the first of July, when the regular paying season opens?"

"How about me?" Omar asked, suddenly. "Looks like you're forgetting me, Mr. Ankerman."

"You!" said Ankerman, in genuine astonishment. "What have you got to do with it? As I understand it, you're simply a free boarder, living on the efforts of Harmony and George."

"You hired the three of us, didn't you?" Omar demanded, hotly. "I'm one of us, ain't I? Do I get my fifty a week or not?"

"I'll have to leave that to Harmony," the boss answered, gently. "He tells me that all the advertising projects you have so far suggested are no good. How about it, Harmony?"

"Well," said Harmony, slowly, "I can't conceal the truth. So far, George and I have done the work, and Omar has done the eating. Of course, he may come through with a bright idea one of these days, and likewise the hotel cat may begin laying duck eggs. Nobody can foresee the future."

"I *may!*" Omar interrupted, heatedly. "That's rich, that is. If you two maniacs would listen to me and use some of my schemes, we could get twice as much free advertising for Pebble Beach."

"The little chap means well," Harmony continued, apologetically, "and he may help us before the first of the month. In that case, put him on the pay-roll."

"All right," agreed Ankerman. "Suppose we leave it that way. I want to do the right thing by you boys, because so far your work has been very good indeed."

When he went out of the room, I thought Omar was going to have a fit with shrieking on the office rug, and the names he called us would have brought the blush of shame to the cheek of a cannibal. We bore with him in patience, because after all he is our Omar and belongs to us, the same as our dyspepsia.

"I'll show you up," he bellowed until the lady in No. 4 knocked on the wall. "Before this is ended, I'll show Ankerman how bright you and George are. You see if I don't!"

"You better walk out of here," said Harmony, after a bit. "George and I have to make up a piece for a San Francisco magazine and you annoy us horribly. Go on."

He removed himself from the scene, very irritable and disgusted, and from then on he greeted us with words of insult. This was in June. As the month wore on he referred with increasing frequency to the approaching pay-roll.

"I'm going to get on that thing," he said, harshly. "If you and Harmony get paid, I'm going to get paid. You steal most of my ideas, anyhow, and use them. You pretend they're no good, but I see them in print."

This was not the truth; we told him so pointedly.

"If it wasn't for me we never should have got these jobs," he insisted. "I deserve a salary, and I'm going to have it."

"You wanted to be honest, didn't you?" Harmony demanded. "Well, we're honest. You get a third of what George and I earn, don't you? It wouldn't be honest to make

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Ankerman pay you fifty a week—not unless you do something to earn it. I know what honesty is and so do you."

Don't think that the precious officials of El Camino, led by Mayor Mortimer Tukes, were not painfully aware of what was taking place in Pebble Beach. The larger town had always regarded Pebble Beach as a squint-eyed stepchild which could have the overflow of summer-tourist trade—if there was any. It now seemed plain that Mr. Mayor Tukes had overlooked a bet. People began coming into El Camino on trains and stopping just long enough to ask the town policeman how you got to Pebble Beach. Visitors who had flocked to Mr. Tukes's town in previous years informed him that they intended to give Pebble Beach a whirl this year, seeing it was going to be so lively; and it all looked very soft and lovely as the time approached when we would be paid weekly in cash.

We encountered Mayor Tukes one afternoon on the highway. We were riding luxuriously in the Golden Knoll motor-car, and Mr. Tukes was tooling one of those small, frantic, self-propelled vehicles.

"Well, Mr. Tukes," Harmony said, with a large, friendly smile. "Looks as if you made a mistake when you didn't hire us that time. Didn't I tell you we were live wires? Have you observed Pebble Beach since we took charge?"

"You're a couple of rogues," remarked the mayor, overlooking Omar, who was under the rug.

"No," said Harmony, "we're the people that are going to make a pot of money for the Ankerman estate. If anybody stops in El Camino this season, it will be to fix a tyre. You and the other petty-larceny officials are going to have that town all to yourselves."

The mayor said a couple of things here that referred more or less vaguely to the hereafter and our place in it, after which he rode away in a cloud of blue smoke, profanity, and enraged sounds.

That's how we stood with the sainted mayor of El Camino. He disliked us very heartily, and naturally I was surprised to hear about him and Omar as I did later on that same week. Harmony and Omar came down the hall together, and I could hear them in controversy.

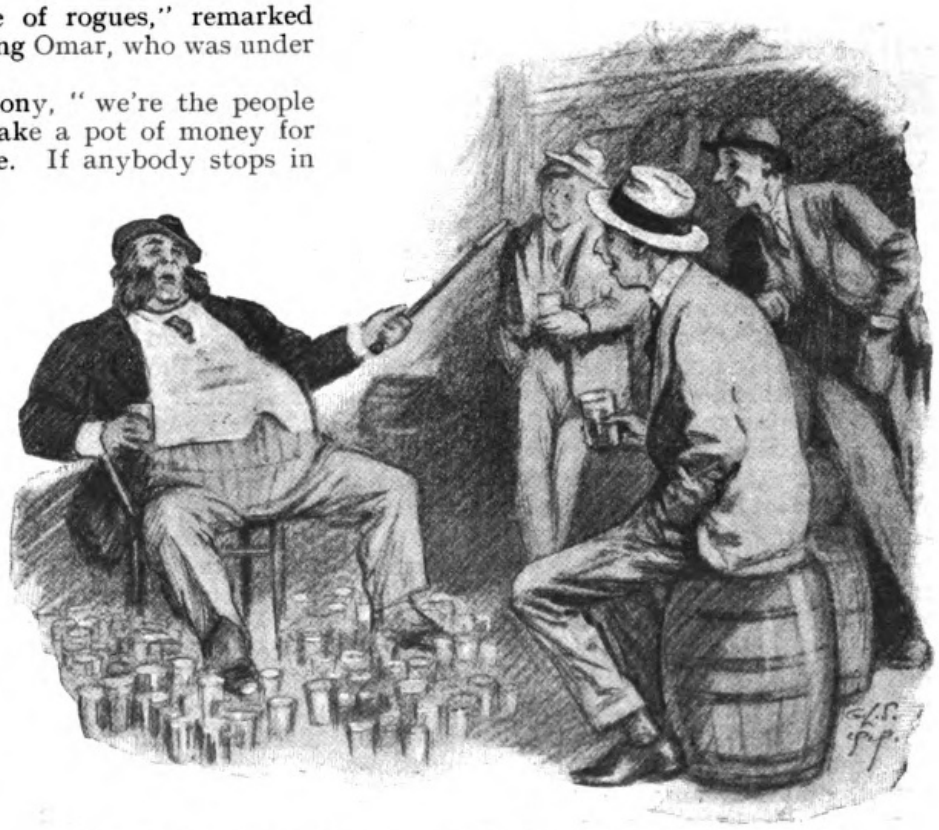
"He ain't such a bad chap at all," Omar was insisting. "He has a lot of good points.'

"So has a mosquito," retorted Harmony. "What do you think, George? Our little private thorn-in-the-side has been fraternizing with old Mayor Tukes, the El Camino poison lizard. Thinks Mr. Tukes is a nice man—and after him practically throwing us out of his office."

"Didn't I know him back in Minneapolis?" Omar protested. "And what's the harm? He simply asked me if I wanted to take a ride, and I took a ride. I don't see anybody around Pebble Beach breaking their neck to be nice to me."

"After the way he treated us, I should think you would have more pride," I said, mildly, but Omar merely scowled at me and did something insulting with his thumb.

Presently there came the tourist advance-guard into Pebble Beach, and with it fresh and diverse activities. Telegrams and letters arrived daily for Monsieur Ankerman, requesting terms, rooms, and bungalows with southern exposure. All was excitement and the pleasurable commotion of a live summer



"HE WAS SITTING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TAPROOM, ENTIRELY SURROUNDED BY GLASSES OF MIXED ALE."

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resort getting under way for a large season. In the midst of this hum and bustle our employer came in and asked us how about the Fourth of July.

"We always try to have a rousing celebration on the Fourth," he explained, "and this year we've got to outdo ourselves. We've got to have a tremendous Fourth, because we'll have a tremendous crowd, all of whom are potential residents."

"Oh, sure," Harmony said, vaguely.

"I'd like to have a regular programme of events with the usual fireworks, speeches, sporting contests, and so forth; but what I mostly want is something new, unique, and striking—some big stunt that we can yell about in our advertising. Consequently it will have to be a novelty. This place isn't full up by a long shot, and if we can come through with a whacking Fourth of July, we'll hook many an undecided prospect."

"Oh, sure," Harmony said again.

"Give it some thought," Ankerman commanded us, and then he departed. I violate no secret confidence when I say that Harmony and I did give that proposed celebration some thought. We darn near blew out all our fuses trying to think of something, but without conspicuous success. It was easy enough to prepare an attractive programme, but what we lacked was the big novelty. Several things occurred to our joint minds, but when we suggested them Ankerman turned them down. Omar heard about what we were trying to do and gloated.

"Why should he ask you two mental misfits for an idea?" he inquired. "You wouldn't know a big idea if it crawled into the bath-tub with you and began washing itself."

"Then you think of something for us," Harmony suggested in tones of sweet sarcasm. "Take your brain out of its moth balls and evolve a unique idea. So far you haven't earned the price of a tapioca pudding."

"I probably shall," Omar answered, calmly. "I shall probably set myself down and think of something. You two alleged experts are all right when we're running a crooked game, but when it comes to honest doings you're helpless because your minds don't work honest."

The funny part is that the little sand squab did think of something. Strange as it may sound, he came across with a July the Fourth idea, and, being violently jealous of me and Harmony, he hurried to the office of Mr. Ankerman prepared to demonstrate who was the real brains of the outfit. He told the hotel magnate his suggestion; it was approved, and he came bounding up to the rooms, where he rushed in on us as we struggled with the daily routine.

"I said I'd show you up," he howled, "and I did. Ankerman says I've got a great idea. And besides that he has agreed to put me on the pay roll on July the first. Only there's a slight difference. He says I might as well have seventy-five a week and that he's surprised at me. Get that? Seventy-five!"

I looked at him to see if he was lying.

"Tell us all about it," Harmony said, in a tone of simulated kindness. "I'm willing to admit that you might accidentally run into a thought."

"Oh, you are, are you? How generous! You and George fell down on the most important part of this July the Fourth Durbar, and you realize it. Now I come across with the big idea. After this, when we go into a business together, try to remember that I'm one of us, and don't push me out in the rain."

"What is your idea, Omar?" I inquired.

Then he told us, lolling back proudly on the couch and acting artistic and important like the leader of an orchestra.

"If it wasn't for hats and hair, you wouldn't ever need your heads at all," he remarked, blowing a triumphant cloud of smoke. "My idea is this. The people of California have been reading of how the Germans blow up passenger steamers at sea. They have never seen such a thing, or anything like it. They are interested. I propose to show them exactly how a stately liner is torpedoed in mid-ocean, all very spectacular, and ending up the day's exercises, the unimportant parts of which have been arranged by you and Harmony."

"How?" I demanded.

"Blow up a ship," explained Omar. "Blast it to the high portals of heaven before their eyes. Torpedo it while they look on, with the passengers taking to the boats in panic, the torpedo rushing through the calm sea toward the doomed ship, children shrieking and so forth, etcetera. The tourists sit along the rim of the sea in their motors and watch this spectacle. Ankerman says it's the finest thing he ever heard of and will draw a crowd. It draws me seventy-five dollars a week, too, beginning July the first. Now am I any good or not?"

"Blow up a real ship!" Harmony said, in tones of incredulity.

"Certainly," grinned Omar.

"Where'll you get a ship?" Harmony jeered.

"Oh," said Omar, calmly, "I've got it already. I'm not like you two. When I start anything, I finish it."

From that hour he was the most arrogant and intolerable little beast you can imagine. He lorded it over us constantly, and we refrained from killing him because we knew his mother.

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"Where are you going to get this ship?" Harmony demanded, repeatedly, only to be informed that the larger phases of business affairs should always be left in the hands of big men. He declined to discuss his mid-ocean Teutonic outrage with us at all. He merely stated that it would be a large, impressive-looking vessel, equipped with a couple of funnels to give it the real liner look, a false superstructure similar to the *Mauretania's*, plenty of port-holes, boats hanging drunkenly from the davits, and so forth.

"The idea is to torpedo her just about dusk," he explained, as though talking to a couple of small and backward children. "She will be loaded with dynamite, T.N.T., guncotton, nitroglycerine, and similar ostentatious poisons. We shall anchor her out there in the bay, where one and all can take a long look and behold the explosion. It will be a fitting climax to a large day, the details of which are left to lesser minds, like yours. Now get a move on you and advertise it right. You're likely to spoil it even yet."

"You misled me about Omar," Mr. Ankerman said to Harmony, in a reproachful manner. "The little man is a real genius. With regard to good ideas, he's a bear."

"He's something with four feet all right," Harmony agreed, sourly, "but not a bear. Jackass is the right word."

On the third of July the long-awaited and mysterious ocean liner came into Pebble Beach, worked by a timid crew and directed from the shore by O. Gill, master mariner. Her hold was full of quick-burning explosives, and the crew walked in bare feet and very gently while they let down the anchors in the spot appointed by the rough-mannered sea-dog in the rowboat who put out to meet them, that same being our Omar.

"It ain't a bad idea," I said to Harmony on the morning of the Fourth, looking out to sea. "That old tub isn't exactly an ocean liner, but it looks like one, and the blowing up will be interesting. We may be doing Omar an injustice."

"If it was anybody besides Omar Gill, I'd have more confidence," he said, gloomily.

I will pass lightly over the events that intervened. The populace came to Pebble Beach as they had never come before, and a good many of them looked at the Ankerman bungalows and announced that they would probably stay for the season instead of going to El Camino as usual.

I met Harmony in the early afternoon of the great day, and we stood in front of the hotel, in a meditative mood, gazing upon the animated scene spreading before us. Out on the azure bay rowboats darted about, pursued by the motor launches, and in the middle of everything, a grim and sinister figure, stood Omar's ocean liner, contemplating its last day on water. Everything was indeed propitious.

"George," said Harmony, in a serious way, "I don't know but what honesty pays after all. Here we are getting a nice salary along with our board and lodging, and all this prosperity is our own handiwork. We ought always to think of this if we're ever tempted again to do wrongful acts."

"True," I admitted. "There's something in that, Harmony."

"Yah," said a voice, approaching us, "but where would you be without Omar Gill, eh? I ask you that. Who brought these crowds? Didn't they come here to look at my German explosion? Sure they did. I'm the one that put this beach on the map, and don't forget it."

As dusk approached the crowds sought points of vantage from which to see exactly how it looked when a German torpedo plunged into a defenceless ship at sea. They climbed on the high rocks behind the Golden Knoll, crawled upon their cars, and fought politely for good seats on the hotel verandas.

Omar galloped around as busy as a three-headed cat in a bird-shop. He was everywhere at once, giving orders to people in a loud, impudent voice, and at eight o'clock, soon after dusk, the fake ocean liner began to light up from stem to stern. This was achieved by a stevedore carrying lanterns, which he hung carefully all over the ship, decorating her and bringing out her outlines. Everybody said, "Ah!" like when a sky-rocket bursts, and promptly at fifteen minutes past eight O. Gill, the demon idea-getter, pushed the electric button and blew his liner into nine million pieces; maybe more.

Augustus Ankerman personally congratulated Omar Gill, and I thought the little weasel would burst with pride. It being a hard day on one and all, the folks began to drift up to bed soon after the explosion, and gradually the sights and sounds of Pebble Beach faded away and the mantle of night stole over all. The last thing I recall was Omar, walking up and down in our rooms with a lighted cigarette, calling our attention to how good he was.

"After this," he said, gently, "whenever you two hounds get yourselves into a fix, you'd better consult me. I'm a natural fountain of ideas, I am."

"Dry up," Harmony said, sleepily, and thereafter peace reigned.

I remember that I awakened about four in the morning, oppressed by a strange, uncanny presentiment that all was not well in the world. I crept out of bed and slid over to the open window. There was

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a brilliant moon aloft under the clear blue dome of heaven, and I noticed with some astonishment that several figures were stirring down on the beach, although it was approaching the hour of dawn. Among them was Augustus Peabody Ankerman.

Likewise I became suddenly aware of the most profound, penetrating, and evil odour that I have ever smelled in this world. I breathed in a quick lungful and reeled back from the open window. I called hoarsely to Harmony, and he stumbled out of his room and joined me by the window. "What is it?" he gasped, reaching for his nose.

"Garlic," I said, in a strangled whisper.

"Where is it coming from?"

I pointed a trembling but eloquent finger toward the beach. A thin, white line of breakers was curling in over the hard sand; and there was also another thin, white line of something that was not breakers or foam or salt water. It was a sort of hazy, scummy-looking substance, floating like thistle-down upon the rollers and dashing upon the beach.

"You mean that white stuff?" he demanded, in horror, but still clinging to his beak. "Garlic?"

"I think so," I said, dazedly. "Let's wake up Omar, and we'll go and see."

We went in and looked upon Omar. He was lying there innocently upon his back, with his mouth open, making noises like a rhinoceros dying in pain. We dragged him out of bed by the neck and flung him to his feet.

"Wassa marrer?" he inquired.

"I dunno," I admitted, "but it looks to me like the end of the world. Do you smell anything?"

He roused himself and said that he thought he detected the faint odour of gardenias. In silent haste the three of us dressed and sped rapidly from our rooms, out of the silent and sleeping hotel, and down to the beach, taking the back way. At the edge of the surf we paused and nearly keeled over. Man alive, how it did rise up and smite upon our noses! I bent over gingerly and examined the thin, grey layer of scum-like substance that floated lazily in and out with the sighing surf. It was garlic. There was no doubt. And it was the most trenchant, far-reaching, and horse-powerful garlic I have ever encountered. It reached up and down the beach, both ways, as far as the eye could see in that dim light.

A bit of charred wreckage drifted in and settled at my feet even as we gazed. It was a part of one of the false funnels off Omar's torpedoed liner. I turned and grabbed Omar by the collar.

"You see that stuff?" I said to him.

"Yes, and I smell it, too," he replied, mildly.

"Where did you get that ship you blew up?"

"What's that got to do with the garlic?" he asked in dumb, Omaric astonishment.

Harmony walked over and confronted him, pushing me gently out of the way, and I saw in his eye that Omar had come to the end of his rope. We both began to perceive something, and one of the things I saw was the end of those fifty-dollar jobs, with our first pay-day still to come. Likewise I beheld in my mind the vanishing of our lovely rooms, with board. Harmony saw the same thing, and when he addressed the shaking Omar I scarcely recognized his voice.

"Where did you get that boat?" he asked, very low and tense.

"Why," said our thinker, trying to assume a light and nonchalant manner, "I got it from Mr. Mayor Tukes of El Camino."

"Holy suffering salt mackerel," Harmony groaned, and he stepped into the surf. I stood there in thought. As I reflected I recalled that El Camino Harbour is always full of craft that have come in from the ports down coast, bearing their cargoes of produce, to be shipped inland by rail. They bring potatoes, do these coasting vessels, and beans, and sugar beets, and oranges and lemons and walnuts from the great and fertile Imperial Valley, and likewise there comes on them an occasional cargo of the famous and outrageous Imperial Valley garlic, than which there can be nothing more devastating in Nature. They tell me Italian garlic from the slopes of Vesuvius is a powerful drug, with a kick that can dethrone kings, but Italian garlic is a sweet, delicate, and innocent bloom compared to this armour-piercing stuff they grow in Imperial.

"You see," I said to Harmony, as calmly as I could, "he's ruined everything. The little toad has simply blown up a whole boatload of garlic, at the suggestion of and provided by Mayor Tukes. He has shattered and grated, and desiccated, and chewed up a shipload of this infernal stuff, and it is now spread along thirty-one miles of a concave beach, where it will never go away. I make a motion. Let's start out of here now, before the light gets strong and crime is committed."

Off in the distance people were hastening out of their bungalows, and the murmur of inquiring voices grew louder, but not as loud as the voice of Augustus Peabody Ankerman. He was walking around in frantic circles asking people to direct him to us.

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"Where are they?" he yelled, and we could hear the echo rambling up and down the hills

"Y'hear?" I said, in a low voice, to my pals. "Y'hear that? He wants us!"

"And it won't do us any good if he finds us," Harmony answered. "Let's go down this way and get in behind that row of trees."

"Well," said Omar, as we trotted on towards the sheltering eucalyptus trees, "I don't understand this yet. Mortimer Tukes is a friend of mine. To tell the truth, he suggested blowing up the ocean liner to me, and not only that, but he supplied me with the ship, packed in the dynamite, and everything. All I did was to bring it over here and push the button."



"HE WAS WALKING AROUND IN FRANTIC CIRCLES, ASKING, 'WHERE ARE THEY?'"

"That ain't all you did," Harmony replied, hoarsely. "You've ruined the first good business chance we've had for years. But, after all, it's my own fault for trying to make an honest man out of *you*. You can't make a silk purse out of a turnip."

We drew three long breaths and started silently in the general direction of the North Pole.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 75.

(The Third of the Series.)

HOUSES were built upon it in the days
Ere London was consumed in fiery blaze.

1. 'Tis slow but sure: despise it in your cricket
   And often it will make you lose your wicket.
2. Light blue or dark, wielded by lusty man:
   In eighteen twenty-nine the race began.
3. His son, though born when taxicabs were not,
   Was wondrous speedy in his chariot.
4. For him in vain did Johnson intercede,
   Though few with such persuasiveness could plead.
5. Here is the ship, in sailors' phrase, which lies
   Within the vision of unaided eyes.
6. "What's in it?" Juliet cried. Does not a rose
   Without it still give pleasure to the nose?

KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostic No. 75 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on January 10th.*

To every light one alternative answer may be sent it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO No. 73.

1. A	ntri	M
2. C	arolin	A
3. R	in	G
4. O	meg	A
5. S	ue	Z
6. T	isr	I
7. I	ro	N
8. C	on	E

NOTES.—Light 1. Ant, rim. 5. Zeus. 8. C, 100; one.

ANSWER TO No. 74.

1. E	b	B
2. A	l	I
3. R	ule	R
4. L	a	D
5. Y	e	S

NOTES.—Light 2. Ali Baba. 4. Lad, glad.

Correspondents who write to the Acrostic Editor and desire answers should enclose a stamped addressed envelope with their letters, and the A. E. will endeavour to reply. Lack of space makes it impossible to answer in print.

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SEE OPPOSITE PAGE.



WILL CREATE A SENSATION.

The Greatest Romance of Real Life

ever told—the Life-Story of Colonel Lawrence, who raised an army of 200,000 Arabs. Colonel Lawrence is now admittedly

One of our World Heroes.

For many years he lived with the Arabs. To them he became a great white god. They would not have betrayed him for all the gold in the world. At twenty-six he was

the uncrowned King of the Hejaz, Prince of Mecca.

His fame will go down to posterity. His amazing life has been written by Mr. Lowell Thomas, who met and lived with Lawrence in the deserts of Arabia, and whose thrilling account of the campaign in the Holy Land has attracted nearly half a million people to the Albert Hall and Covent Garden Opera House.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE *says:*

"Everything that Mr. Lowell Thomas says about Colonel Lawrence is true. In my opinion, Colonel Lawrence is one of the most remarkable and romantic figures of modern times."

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"THE UNCROWNED KING OF ARABIA"

COLONEL T·E·LAWRENCE

THE MOST ROMANTIC CAREER OF MODERN TIMES.

By Lowell Thomas



COLONEL T. E. LAWRENCE.

This instalment introduces Colonel Lawrence to the reader and gives an outline of the striking events which, later on, are to be described in full. See the announcement at the end of the article.

HOW I FIRST MET LAWRENCE.

ONE day, not long after General Allenby had captured Jerusalem, I happened to be in front of a bazaar on Christian Street remonstrating with a fat old Turkish shopkeeper who was attempting to charge twenty piastres for a handful of dates. My attention was drawn to a group of Arabs walking in the direction of the Damascus Gate. The fact that they were Arabs was not what caused me to drop my tirade against the high cost of dates, because Palestine is inhabited by a far greater number of Arabs than Jews. My curiosity was excited by a single Bedouin, who stood out in sharp relief from all his companions. He was wearing an agal, kuffieh, and abba such as are worn in the Near East only by native rulers. In his belt was fastened the short curved gold sword of a prince of Mecca, insignia that marked him as a descendant of the Prophet.

Christian Street is one of the most picturesque and kaleidoscopic thoroughfares in all Asia Minor. Russian Jews, Greek priests in tall black hats and flowing robes, desert nomads in goat-skin coats like those worn in the time of Abraham, Turks with red tarbooshes, Arab merchants lending a brilliant note with their gay turbans and gowns—all rub elbows in that narrow lane of bazaars and shops and coffee-houses that leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Jerusalem is not a melting-pot. It is an uncompromising meeting-place of East and West. Here are accentuated, as if sharply outlined in black and white by the desert sun, the racial peculiarities of Christian, Jewish, and Mohammedan peoples. A stranger must, indeed, have something extraordinary about him to attract attention on the streets of the Holy City. But as this young Bedouin passed by in his magnificent royal robes, the crowds in front of the bazaars turned to look at him.

It was not merely his costume. It was not the majesty with which he carried his

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five foot three, marking him every inch a king, or at least a caliph in disguise, who had stepped out of the pages of "The Arabian Nights" to examine the latest improvements in warfare. The striking fact was that the mysterious prince of Mecca looked no more like a son of Ishmael than an Abyssinian looks like one of Stefansson's Eskimos. Bedouins, although of the Caucasian race, have had their skins scorched by the relentless desert sun until their complexions are the colour of lava. But this chap was as blond as a Scandinavian, in whose veins flows Viking blood and the cool tradition of fiords and sagas. The nomadic sons of Ishmael all wear flowing beards, as their ancestors did in the time of Abraham. The youth with the curved gold sword was clean-shaven. He walked rapidly, with his hands folded. His blue eyes, oblivious to his surroundings, were wrapped in some inner contemplation. My first thought, as I glanced at his face, was that he might be one of the youngest of the apostles returned to life. His expression was serene, almost saintly, in its selflessness and repose.

"Who is he?" I turned eagerly to the Turkish shopkeeper, who could only manipulate a little tourist English. He only shrugged his shoulders.

Who could he be? I was certain of getting some information about him from General Sir Ronald Storrs, Governor of the Holy City; so I strolled over in the direction of his palace, just outside the old wall near the quarries of King Solomon. General Storrs was Oriental Secretary to the High Commissioner of Egypt before the fall of Jerusalem, and always kept in intimate touch with the peoples of Palestine. He speaks Hebrew, Arabic, Greek, and Latin, with much the same fluency and charm that he speaks English. I knew he could tell me something about my blond Bedouin.

"Who is the blue-eyed youth with the curved sword of a prince of——"

The General did not even let me finish the question. He quietly opened the door of an adjoining room. There, seated in a comfortable Morris-chair, with his feet disrespectfully planted on the same table where the German General, Falkenhayn, worked out his unsuccessful plan for defeating Allenby, was the Bedouin prince who had passed me on Christian Street earlier in the afternoon. He was deeply absorbed in a ponderous tome on archæology.

In introducing us, General Storrs said: "I want you to meet Colonel Lawrence, the "uncrowned King of Arabia.'"

He shook hands courteously, but shyly, and with a certain air of aloofness, as if his mind was on buried treasures and not on the affairs of this immediate world of campaigns and warfare. And that was how I first made the acquaintance of one of the most unique and picturesque personalities of modern times, a man who will be blazoned on the romantic pages of history with Sir Walter Raleigh, Sir Francis Drake, Lord Clive, Chinese Gordon, and Kitchener of Khartoum.

During the last five years of epic events, among others, two remarkable figures have appeared. The dashing adventures and anecdotes of their careers will furnish golden themes to the writers of the future, as the lives of Ulysses, King Arthur, and Richard the Lion-Hearted to the poets, troubadours, and chroniclers of other days. One is a massive, towering, square-jawed six-footer—that smashing British cavalry leader, Field-Marshal Lord Allenby, Commander of the Twentieth Century Crusaders, who has gained world-fame because of his exploit in driving the Turks from the Holy Land, downing the Crescent, and raising the Cross over Jerusalem. The other is the undersized, beardless youth whom I first saw absorbed in a technical treatise on the cuneiform inscriptions discovered on the bricks of ancient Babylon.

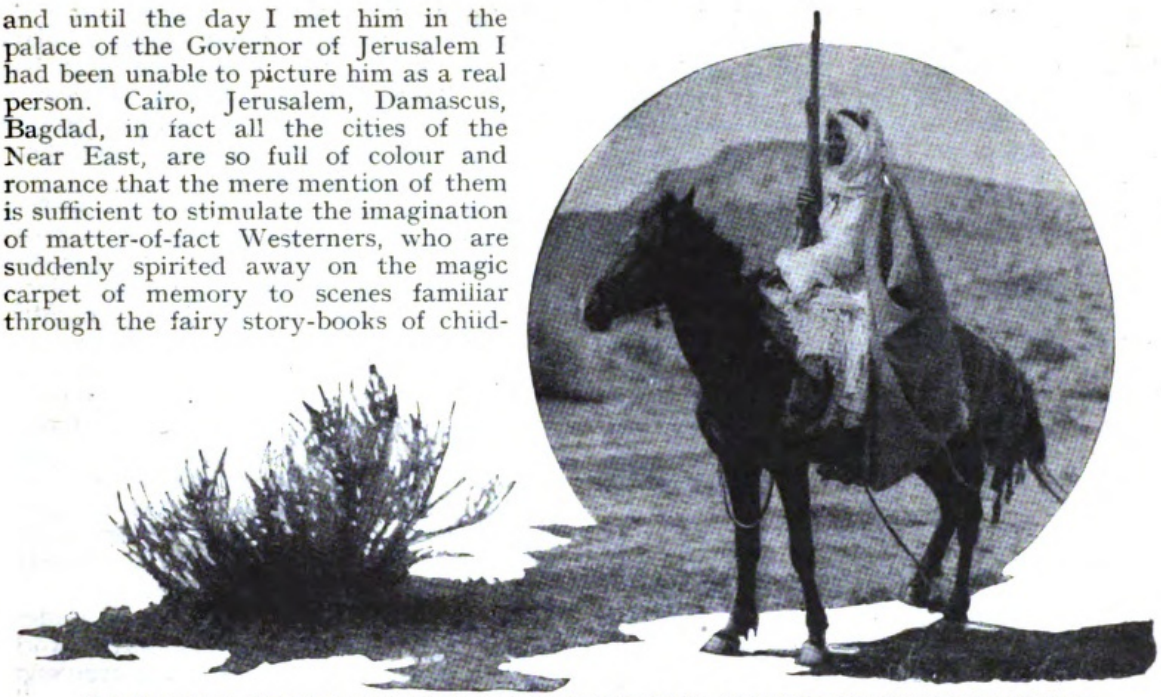
HIS SPECTACULAR ACHIEVEMENTS.

The spectacular achievements of Thomas Edward Lawrence, the young Oxford graduate, are still unknown except to a handful of his associates. Yet quietly, without any theatrical headlines or fanfare of trumpets, he brought the disunited nomadic tribes of Arabia into a unified campaign against their Turkish oppressors—a difficult and splendid stroke of policy which caliphs, statesmen, and sultans had been unable to accomplish in centuries of effort. Lawrence placed himself at the head of the Bedouin army of the King of the Hejaz, drove the Turks from Arabia, and restored the caliphate to the descendants of the Prophet. Allenby liberated Palestine, the holy land of Jews and Christians; Lawrence freed Arabia, the holy land of millions of Mohammedans.

I had heard of the mysterious Lawrence many times during the months I was in Palestine with General Allenby. On my way from Italy to Egypt, one of the officers on the cruiser told me that an Englishman was supposed to be in command of an army of wild Bedouins somewhere in the trackless deserts of the far-off land of "The Arabian Nights." This was the first rumour which reached me of Lawrence's exploits. In Egypt and Palestine I heard fantastic tales of his exploits. And always his name was mentioned in solemn, hushed tones, because at this time the Arabian affair was supposed to be a secret. Lawrence became to me a new Oriental legend of the war in the making,

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and until the day I met him in the palace of the Governor of Jerusalem I had been unable to picture him as a real person. Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus, Bagdad, in fact all the cities of the Near East, are so full of colour and romance that the mere mention of them is sufficient to stimulate the imagination of matter-of-fact Westerners, who are suddenly spirited away on the magic carpet of memory to scenes familiar through the fairy story-books of chiid-



A BEDOUIN SHEIKH READY TO JOIN COLONEL LAWRENCE ON ONE OF HIS SPECTACULAR RAIDS.

THE LIFE OF A THOROUGHBRED ARABIAN HORSE IS VALUED MORE HIGHLY BY THE BEDOUINS THAN THE LIFE OF THE AVERAGE MAN. THE ARAB FEEDS HIS HORSE ON CAMEL'S MILK AND GOAT'S MEAT COOKED TO SHREDS.

hood. So I had come to the conclusion that Lawrence was the product only of Western imagination overheated by exuberant contact with the East. But the myth turned out to be very much of a reality.

WHAT THE MAN HIMSELF IS LIKE.

The five-foot-three Englishman standing before me, in his brown camel's gown, over which hung his kuffieh or head-dress of heavy white brocaded silk, covered with gold embroidery, underneath a snow-white robe tied with a gold-embroidered belt in which he carried the curved sword of a prince of Mecca, all set off regally by the agal, the head-band of heavy cords wrapped with silver and gold threads that held the kuffieh in place—was the real ruler of Arabia. He was the commander-in-chief of an army of more than two hundred thousand Bedouins mounted on racing camels and fleet Arabian horses. He was the terror of the Turks. Destiny had never played a stranger prank than when it selected as the man to play the major *rôle* in the liberation of Arabia an Oxford graduate whose life ambition was to dig in the ruins of antiquity and uncover and study long-forgotten cities.

I was greatly impressed with Lawrence from the first. Realizing that he was a man destined to occupy a prominent position in history, and not knowing at that time that it would be my good fortune to join him later in Arabia as the only person given the opportunity of recording his almost unbelievable achievements, I spent a good deal of time with him during the following days in Jerusalem before he returned to his Arabian army. When Lawrence was in the company of officers who were more or less strangers to him, he usually sat in a corner, listening intently to everything that was being said, but contributing nothing to the conversation himself. After we became better acquainted, through his discovery that archæology held a fascination for me also, he would invariably, when we were alone, get up from his chair and squat on the floor Bedouin fashion. He had lived so long in the desert that it was more natural for him to act like an Arab nomad than a European. I made many unsuccessful attempts to induce him to tell something of his life, but he always adroitly changed the subject. Even concerning his connection with the Arabian army, he would say nothing except to give the credit for everything that happened in the desert campaigns to the Arab leaders. The only subjects on which I could persuade him to talk in other than monosyllables were archæology, comparative religion, Greek literature, and Near Eastern politics.

His home is in Oxford, and his parents belong to the higher middle-class. His

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father's name was Thomas also, and he was a large landowner in Ireland, and a famous sportsman a generation ago. At one time the family was wealthy, but they lost most of their worldly possessions as the result of legislation during the Gladstonian period, when the bottom fell out of land values in Ireland.

The Lawrence family originally came from Galway, Ireland, several hundred years ago. This partly accounts for Lawrence's rather remarkable powers of physical endurance, because the people of Galway are among the hardiest of their race. This light-haired "prince of Mecca" belongs to the same family as his famous predecessor, John Lawrence, who was one of Britain's Empire builders in India at the time of the Great Mutiny.

Colonel T. E. Lawrence was born in Carnarvon, the same county in Wales that Lloyd George comes from, and the Prime Minister is one of the former's warmest friends and admirers. In fact, it is a case of mutual admiration. Mr. Lloyd George kept in close touch with Lawrence's work in the desert, and consulted with him constantly during the sessions of the Peace Conference in Paris, which Lawrence attended as the real head of the Arabian delegation.

As a boy he lived for five years in Jersey, one of the Channel Islands. When ten years of age his family moved to Northern Scotland, where they remained for three years. Then they moved to France, where Lawrence attended a Jesuit College for several years. From the Continent the Lawrences came to Oxford, where Thomas attended a day school for a short time, although nearly all his preparatory work was done with tutors. Then he attended Oxford University, or, at any rate, took the examinations which enabled him to receive his degree.

There were four other boys in the family, one older and three younger. The eldest, Montague, is a Major in the Royal Army Medical Corps; the youngest is now attending Oxford; while the other two, William and Frank, were killed on the Western Front. William was a teacher in a school at Delhi, India, before the war, and Frank was just out of Oxford.

All his life, Colonel Lawrence has been a student of peoples both of the present and of the past; but, so far as I know, he has never had any intimate friends and has preferred to stand on one side and watch others. He has a very sympathetic nature, and would rather help a downtrodden people to assert their rights than to amass all the wealth in the world. He has unusual ability when it comes to mastering languages, among them being English, French, Italian, Spanish, German, Greek, Latin, Dutch, Norwegian, and Arabic. Unquestionably he is one of the greatest living Arabic scholars and one of the few Europeans who has ever mastered the pure Arabic of Central Arabia. Among the other Arabic dialects which he speaks are Syrian, Palestinian, Allepian, and Mesopotamian.

During his University career at Oxford he was noted for being a recluse. Frequently he would disappear most unexpectedly from the University for long tramps about Europe. He has always been eccentric in his habits. Although he finished the regular four years of academic work at Oxford in three, he never attended a single lecture during his college days, preferring to spend most of his time reading mediæval literature. Much of the time he preferred to sleep during the day and work at night. He has never yet dined with anyone in the three Oxford Colleges which he attended —Jesus, Magdalen, and All Souls.

Lawrence has always been a keen student of military writers. His favourite work, until he took part in the Arabian campaign, was Marshal Foch's "Principe de Guerre"; although he once told me in Arabia that his study of Cæsar and Xenophon had been of more value to him in his desert campaign, because in his irregular war against the Turks he had to adopt directly opposite tactics from those advocated by Marshal Foch. He has also been a keen student of mediæval French literature, and is particularly fond of Gothic art.

SOME OF HIS EASTERN DISCOVERIES.

In 1908, before he finished his University work, he urged his parents to allow him to go to the Near East. At the time he was engaged in writing a book on the military architecture of the Crusades, and he wanted to go over the actual ground covered by the Crusaders. His family finally gave him permission and one hundred pounds, fully expecting that he would spend it in making a flying Cook's tour of Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine, and return home quite ready to settle down and forget the Orient. But he scorned tourists' comforts and the beaten track. As soon as he arrived in Syria he adopted native costume and tramped barefoot over thousands of miles of unknown desert country, living with the various Bedouin tribes, and studying the manners and customs of all that complicated mosaic of peoples who dwell in the ancient corridor between Mesopotamia and the Nile Valley. When he finally returned to England to complete his studies, he still had fifty pounds left of the original sum which his family had given him, and he merely remained at home long enough to finish his studies

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that he might return to the Near East better equipped in his speciality.

Several years before the war, in 1908, the Oxford expedition headed by Lawrence's friend, Commander Hogarth, began excavations in the Euphrates Valley for the purpose of discovering new information regarding the ancient Hittites. Because of Lawrence's intimate knowledge of the native population of the Near East, Hogarth invited him to take charge of the Kurds, Turkomen, Armenians, and Arabs who were employed in digging. This Hogarth-Wooley-Lawrence expedition uncovered part of Carchemish, the ancient capital of the Hittite Empire. Lawrence amused himself with studying Hittite pottery and joining up the stages of Hittite civilization, and he and his associates actually uncovered a lost civilization, which proved to be a link between the civilizations of Ancient Babylon and the East, and the beginnings of Greek culture in the Mediterranean Islands which dated from 3000 B.C. down to about 600 B.C. Lawrence was engaged in archæological work at Carchemish off and on for four years, from 1910 to 1914, and was in command of the digging gang, although he had never studied archæology at Oxford.

One day in the Arabian desert, not far from the enchanted rose-red city of Petra, Lawrence remarked to me that archæological work in Egypt had never appealed to him, and that he would never dig there at any price, because most of the important work had already been done and because Egyptologists of to-day spend most of their time trying to find out when the third whisker was painted on the scarab!

On one of his expeditions for the Palestine Exploration Society, Lawrence and his archæologist companion, *i.e.*, Wooley, attempted to follow the footsteps of the Israelites through the wilderness, and they actually succeeded in discovering Kadesh Barnea of the Bible, where Moses brought water gushing from the rock. They located a place in the Sinai Peninsula, which the Bedouins called Ain Kadis, where there was one very poor well which may quite probably have been the place where the Israelites started complaining to Moses regarding the shortage of water. Lawrence remarked that the Israelites certainly were justified in "grousing" if they had ever camped at that spot. Some five miles distant the two archæologists found a number of fine springs in a little valley called "Gudarat," and they are of the opinion that it was the place where Moses succeeded in regaining the confidence of the Children of Israel by quenching their thirst with the sparkling water of these springs. Here they also found a large and important ancient ruin. Later on, Wooley and Lawrence wrote a book on their expedition for the Palestine Exploration Society called "The Wilderness of Sin." On that trip, among other things, they discovered traces of a civilization dating back to 2500 B.C. in the Sinai Desert, the oldest traces ever found in that country.

The outbreak of the Great War found him excavating Hittite ruins in the valley of the Euphrates. Lawrence had been for some time aware of the seriousness of the situation in the Near East, and realized that a crash was imminent. A Major Young, of the Intelligence Department, who had known Lawrence in Mesopotamia before he entered the British Army, told me a little incident which illustrated Lawrence's keen sense of humour. At that time, in 1914, just before the outbreak of the war, the German engineers were working feverishly along the road of the proposed Berlin to Bagdad Railway. Lawrence and his brother, who was later killed on the Western Front, were excavating ruins in the hills above the



BEDOUIN CAVALRYMEN READY TO FOLLOW LAWRENCE INTO BATTLE.

THESE MEN CAME FROM OASES NEAR AND FAR, RIDING DASHING HORSES AND RACING CAMELS, TO SWEEP THE TURKS FROM ARABIA.

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railway route. He would frequently mount sections of drainage pipes on small mounds of sand on top of the hills.

When the German engineers observed the innocent pipes through their field-glasses they mistook them for British cannon. On at least two occasions they wired to Constantinople and to Berlin that the British were fortifying the most commanding positions in the country. The young archæologist was laughing up his sleeve, but, seriously, he was disappointed, because he felt that his own Government had gone to sleep and had allowed the Germans to acquire almost complete control of the territory between the Bavarian border and the Persian Gulf. In 1912, England, Germany, Russia, France, and Turkey signed a Treaty which gave the Germans the right to go ahead with the Berlin to Bagdad line, and what was even more significant, gave them control of Alexandretta, perhaps the most strategical point in the Near East. As soon as Lawrence learned the outcome of that conference, he rushed to Cairo to see Lord Kitchener, and asked him why England had permitted Germany to get control of Alexandretta. Kitchener replied: "I warned our Foreign Office constantly that their policy would be a fatal one, but they failed to heed me. Within two years there will be a world war. We can't stop it, so run along, young man, and sell your papers."

Lawrence went back to his ancient ruins and toiled lovingly over inscriptions that unlocked the secrets of civilizations that flourished and crumbled to dust thousands of years ago. But with many other scientists and scholars, he was called back to Cairo by the British military authorities in August, 1914. At that time he was twenty-six years old. He had already spent seven years wandering through Turkey, Syria, Palestine, Arabia, Mesopotamia, and Persia, and had acquired a more intimate knowledge of the peoples of Aleppo, Beirut, Jerusalem, Damascus, and Bagdad than almost any other European.

HE JOINS THE ARMY AGAINST THE TURKS.

Because the military authorities knew that Lawrence had lived among Arabs, Kurds, and Turks, and that from his exploration expeditions he might be expected to have a fairly good knowledge of the unfamiliar regions of the Near East, he was given a commission as a second lieutenant in the Map Department. The British generals spent many hours poring over maps and discussing the possibilities of different plans for breaking up the Turkish Empire. Frequently they would outline a scheme for a campaign, and then ask the young lieutenant if he had any suggestions to make. He would often reply: "There are many good points in your plan, but I believe it is fundamentally wrong. I think the campaign should be carried out as follows," and he would point, by way of explanation, to short cuts across valleys, which he alone knew from his years of barefoot travelling. The most staid old Regular army officers on the staff put their confidence in this junior lieutenant, who hardly knew the A B C of army tactics. His suggestions were adopted. In a short time he had established a considerable reputation for himself at headquarters, and became known to all the commanding officers of the British forces in the East.

Later on, in Arabia, Lawrence frequently outwitted the Turks because of his superior knowledge of the topography of the country. Whenever he attacked the enemy he tried to outflank them in the rear when they were not expecting an attack, as at the battles of Akaba and Aba el Lissan. Although he had never had much previous military experience, he was a born strategist, and out-thought and outwitted the Turkish and German commanders in practically every engagement from the time he joined Emir Feisal in the desert east of Wedj until he swept into Damascus.

From 1914 to 1916 young Lawrence kept the War Office informed regarding the movements of the various units of the Turkish Army. He had native agents acting as spies under his orders. In the summer of 1916 the Arabs broke out in revolt against the Turks in the country of the Hejaz, which is that part of Arabia between the Forbidden City of Mecca and the southern end of the Dead Sea. Because of the scarcity of munitions, the revolutionary Arabs ran out of supplies after their first success, and it would have been impossible for them to have gone on if the Allies—particularly Great Britain—had not come to their rescue. The British not only sent supplies to the Arabs, but gave them important military encouragement; they sent them a number of their most brilliant young officers to co-operate with the Arabs and offer them suggestions.

HOW HE DETERMINED TO RAISE AN ARMY OF ARABS.

The way in which Lawrence came to be associated with the Arab uprising is a typical illustration of the irregular way in which he does everything. Chafing under the red-tape of Army regulations, quite a number of differences had come up between General Sir Archibald Murray, Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in the East, the members

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of his staff, and the independent young Lawrence. About that time Ronald Storrs, Oriental Secretary of the High Commissioner of Egypt, and a friend of Lieutenant Lawrence, was about to start on a trip down the Red Sea to Jeddah as the representative of the



H.R.H. PRINCE FEISAL,

THE ENLIGHTENED ARABIAN MONARCH, WHOSE METEORIC RISE TO POWER IN THE NEAR EAST IS LARGELY DUE TO THE MIRACULOUS ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YOUNG OXFORD GENIUS WHOSE LIFE AMBITION IS TO POTTER ABOUT AMONG THE RUINS OF ANTIQUITY. THIS ARAB RULER IS A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF THE PROPHET MOHAMMED.

British Foreign Office to pay his respects to the aged Sherif of Mecca, who had "touched off" the Arabian revolution. Lawrence had long realized the possibility of the Arabs playing an important part in the war against Germany and Turkey in the East, and as his work at G.H.Q. at Cairo had become none too pleasant, he asked Sir Archibald Murray to grant him a fortnight's leave in order that he might accompany Storrs on his trip down the Red Sea. General Headquarters in Cairo evidently was delighted to have the opportunity of getting rid of the altogether too independent subordinate, and granted his request with evident pleasure.

When Storrs and Lawrence reached Jeddah, the latter succeeded in getting permission from the Sherif of Mecca to make a short trip up-country to see Emir Feisal, one of the Sherif's sons who was engaged in guerilla warfare with some of the Turkish forces. The first thing he said to Feisal, after they had exchanged the usual desert compliments, was: "When will you get to Damascus?" Feisal replied that he believed the first important step was to capture Medina, next to Mecca the holiest city of Islam. After two weeks with the Emir, Lawrence became convinced that it would be possible to develop a large irregular Arabian army, and he was so interested in this that he never went back to Cairo to make his apologies. Evidently, Sir Archibald Murray and his staff were not disappointed. And that was the curious way in which the now famous Colonel T. E. Lawrence, "Prince of Mecca" and uncrowned King of Arabia," became connected with the revolution in the Hejaz.

THE PROBLEMS HE HAD TO SOLVE.

In order to understand the complicated problem Lawrence faced, and the overwhelming odds against him, it is necessary to take a swift retrospective glance at the history of Arabia. The Arabian Peninsula is larger than the British Isles and France and Spain combined. The distance from Damascus to Aleppo alone is greater than the distance from London to Rome, and great sweeps of desert separate nearly all

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the important points. For thousands of years this country has been inhabited by wandering tribes of Bedouins and Arab villagers. Although there is a population of over twenty million people in Arabia, the inhabitants have only been loosely held together by travel alliances, something like those that existed among the American Indians a century ago. For centuries no one has been able to bring these peoples together in one unified movement. Scores of generals, statesmen, and Sultans had struggled with the almost impossible mission. How this young British lieutenant, who had had very few days of military drill in his life, succeeded in creating a loose army of some two hundred thousand mounted Bedouins, how he swept the Turks from the Arabian Peninsula, and built this mosaic of peoples into a homogeneous nation, is a story that I should have hesitated to believe had I not actually been with him in the desert.

The inhabitants of Arabia belong to the Semitic race, and are of the same general family as the Jews. Some authorities say that Kahtan, the son of Abeis, the son of Shalah, the son of Arfakhshad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, was the first person to speak the Arabic language. I know of no way of refuting that grave charge against Kahtan, but I do know that after my experience in Arabia I wish he might have used better judgment and selected Eskimo or some other simple language instead. Mohammed, the camel boy of Mecca, was the first person to bind together in any sort of unity the peoples of Arabia. He was able to accomplish this through his religious teachings and evangelization. That was more than a thousand years ago. After the death of Mohammed, Abu Bekr and Ali carried Mohammedanism throughout nearly the whole world as it was known at that time. Their armies swept across the Near East, South-Eastern Europe, Africa, and Spain. The Arabian Empire attained its zenith in the seventh century of this era, and its decline began after the defeat of the Moslem armies at the Battle of Tours in A.D. 732, by Charles Martel. As the power and influence of the Arabs slipped away from them it was usurped by the Ottomans, who swept down out of Central Asia. For five hundred years the Turks governed the Arabs as though they were an inferior race. At almost any time in those five centuries the desert people could have freed themselves had they been able to unite. But from the reign of Harun-al-Rashid down to the present time no one appeared in the Near East strong enough to bring the Arabs together. It remained for young T. E. Lawrence, the British archæologist, to go into Holy Arabia and lead the Arabs through the spectacular and triumphant campaign which broke the backbone of the Turkish Empire and the Pan-German dream of world dominion.

During all those centuries of oppression, whenever enlightened Arabs objected strongly to the tyrannical rule of the Turks, the Sultan would invite them to take up their residence in Constantinople, where they would either be held as prisoners or would be quietly put out of the way. Abdul Hamíd, the last great Sultan of Turkey, was an expert in following the private policy of his predecessors. Among the prominent Arabs whom he found it advisable to have near him at the Sublime Porte was Sherif Hussein of Mecca, the oldest living descendant of Mohammed, the man really entitled to the caliphate, since the title of caliph was originally given to the successors of Mohammed both as spiritual and temporal rulers, and later was usurped by the Turkish masters of Arabia. Sherif Hussein is the sixty-eighth ruler of the Hejaz in the Ottoman period. No people in the world take more pride in their ancestry than the Arabs. The births in all the leading princely families are recorded in Mecca at the Holy Kaaba, a mosque built round a black meteoric stone, the most sacred spot in the world to millions of Moslems. Here on the roll of parchment, on which each ruling Emir of Mecca has written his title, is inscribed the name of Hussein Ibn Ali, recording the pure and direct descent of the Sherif from the prophet of Islam. For eighteen years, Sherif Hussein, the rightful Keeper of the Holy Places, was forced to live with his people on the Bosporus, virtually prisoners under the wary eye of the Red Sultan.

In the Young Turk movement the Arabs thought they saw the dawn of a new era of freedom and liberty. In fact, they played an important part in the revolution which resulted in the overthrow of Abdul Hamid. At that time all Arabian, Armenian, Kurd, Greek, Syrian, and Jewish political prisoners who had been held in Constantinople were released. But the Arabs soon discovered that the Young Turk leaders were more tyrannical oppressors than bloody old Abdul himself, who now seemed quite respectable in comparison with Enver, Talaat, and Djemal. Sherif Hussein and other patriotic Arabs despaired of seeing a happier day for their country, when suddenly the world war pulled Turkey into the maelstrom with Great Britain, France, Russia, and Italy pitted against her. It was the hour of opportunity for Arabia. The Arabian nationalist leaders immediately took advantage of it. With all the pent-up fury and hatred of five hundred years of slavery and dishonour, they leapt at the throats of their villainous masters. From all parts of the desert came the swarthy,

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lean, picturesque sons of Ishmael to avenge and free themselves at last.

Sherif Hussein and his four sons had worked out a plan for the revolution, which they kept secret until a few weeks before they touched off the fuse. They did not even dare trust their close associates, because in Turkish territory plots were usually discovered before they matured, and no man knew whom he might trust. Not only were there spies, but innumerable spies on spies, and at that time the Young Turks were watching the Arabs as a cat watches a mouse.

Early in June, 1916, when Lawrence was establishing his reputation as an authority on the geography of the Near East at the British Headquarters in Cairo, Sherif Hussein sent word to all the tribes of Holy Arabia to be ready to rise at a moment's notice. Then, on June 13th, he gave the signal. Simultaneous attacks were launched against Mecca, a city holier than Jerusalem to more than two hundred and fifty million human beings, and Medina, the second holiest Mohammedan city, where the great Prophet is buried, and also at the great Arabian seaport of Jeddah. Hussein's sons, Ali and Feisal, were in command of the forces at Medina. Hussein himself supervised the attack on Mecca.



ARABS TELLING STORIES OF LAWRENCE'S DEEDS TO SCOTCHMEN FROM A PASSING TRANSPORT AT AKABA.

AKABA IS THE MOST IMPORTANT TURKISH BASE ON THE WESTERN COAST OF THE ARABIAN PENINSULA, WHICH WAS CAPTURED BY THE ARABIAN "IRREGULAR" ARMY UNDER THE COMMAND OF COLONEL LAWRENCE. HERE AT AKABA EMIR FEISAL AND "EMIR" LAWRENCE, "THE UNCROWNED KING OF ARABIA," HAD THEIR COURT FOR NEARLY A YEAR. THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO IT WAS KING SOLOMON'S SEAPORT.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE REVOLT REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME.

The details regarding the origin of the Sherifian Revolt, as it was called, have never been made public before. The following facts, given to me by Emir Feisal and his lieutenants, were later verified by Lawrence.

According to the Emir's story, the Sultan of Turkey had about twenty thousand picked troops in Medina, the northernmost of the two holy Arabian cities and the terminus of what is known as the Hejaz Railway, which runs south of Damascus through the desert east of the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, and the Hills of Moab. Although the Bedouins swarmed down in clouds, the Turks drove them off with their heavy artillery at Medina.

Sherif Hussein was more successful at Mecca. The capture of Mecca will go down in Mohammedan history as one of the four or five great events of all time. It is my privilege to be the first to make public the details of that historic battle, as they were given to me by the Arab chieftains who captured the city and by Mohammed Said el Sakkaf, Arabian Ambassador to Abyssinia, with whom I cruised across the Red Sea.

Not more than a dozen Christians have succeeded in getting to Mecca, disguised as Mohammedans, and have lived to tell the tale. The most famous of these, of course, was Sir Richard Burton, the British traveller and explorer, who translated "The

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Thousand and One Nights." Mecca is situated on the edge of rough mountainous country in a deep narrow valley, completely hidden on the side towards the Red Sea. It is surrounded by high, rocky cliffs, three of which were crowned with forts garrisoned by the Sultan's most faithful Circassian mercenaries and Turkish troops. On June 13th, the day of the attack, the Arabs swept into the city and captured the main bazaar, the residential section, the Hamidieh or Government building, and also the Mosque of the Holy Kaaba. The majority of the garrison fortified themselves in the barracks, but the Arabs brought up one mountain gun which they had captured at Jeddah a few days previously. That city was attacked on the same time as Mecca. It was captured in five days, and over one thousand prisoners were taken there. Five British merchantmen bombarded the seaport under Captain Boyle, a red-headed Irishman, associated with Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, who was commanding the Fleet in the East.

The bombardment of Jeddah, which is the port of entry to the holy city of Mecca, nearly caused a revolution in India. The Mohammedans there are perhaps the most fanatical in the world, and they charged the British with having bombarded one of their holy places. But it was finally made clear to them that Jeddah, the seaport to Mecca, cannot be regarded as a holy city.

THE FALL OF MECCA.

Then for eight days the battle raged around the two smaller forts in Mecca, which were finally taken. All during the fighting the aged Sherif remained in his palace, although it was hit by over three hundred three-inch shells from the Turkish forts.

The Turks undoubtedly would have been able to hang on for many months longer had it not been for their own folly. The Ottoman is a Mohammedan in theory only. He adheres to the ritual but not to the spirit of the Koran. For instance, the Prophet admonished all the Faithful to abstain from the use of intoxicants, and his Arabian followers were never known to drink wines or other liquors. But all the Turks of my acquaintance did. The soldiers in the fort, heedless of the deep-set religious feeling of their enemies and co-religionists, suddenly began to bombard the mosque of the Kaaba, the secret shrine built over the famous black stone which has been kissed by millions of pious Moslems. One shell actually struck the rock, burning a hole in the Holy Carpet and killing nine people who were kneeling in prayer. The Arabs were so enraged by this impious act that they swarmed over the walls of the great fort and captured it after desperate hand-to-hand fighting with daggers and knives. Thus, twenty-one days after the revolution had broken out, they were in undisputed possession of Mecca. With the possible exception of the combined capture by Allenby of Jerusalem, Damascus, Beirut, and Aleppo, this is the most disastrous event in modern Turkish history, because, with the fall of Mecca, the Ottomans lost the holy Mohammedan city, the control of which had enabled them to usurp the leadership of Islam.

Then came a long pause. The Arabs were unable to go on with their revolution because they had expended all their ammunition. Sherif Hussein sent an appeal to the Allies. At this critical moment young Lawrence appeared on the Arabian stage.

The British General Staff permitted Lawrence to remain in Arabia because they knew he could speak the several languages of that country fluently and seemed to know something about the customs of the people. They expected him merely to keep them posted on the progress of events in the Hejaz. But at the same time he was given enough freedom of action to make it possible for him to show what he could do toward assisting the Arabs.

Lawrence's arrival in Arabia was unheralded. His exploits there first became known when he stepped up to General Allenby at Ismailia in Egypt, on the arrival of the great General in the East to take command of the Palestine Expeditionary Forces, and informed the new commander-in-chief of the capture of Akaba, one of the most strategical points in the Near East. This incident was dramatic in its simplicity. General Allenby had been sent out from London to take the place of the previous British commander.

Allenby was standing at the railway station walking up and down talking to Admiral Wemyss. Lawrence was standing near by in Arab garb and saw a very superior-looking general with the Admiral. "Who's that?" he asked of Wemyss's flag-lieutenant. "Allenby," was the reply. "What's he doing here?" queried Lawrence. "He has come out to take Sir Archibald Murray's place." Lawrence was frightfully pleased.

A little later Lawrence informed the Admiral, who was the godfather of the Arab "show," that Akaba had been taken and that food was needed there very badly. Wemyss at once promised to send ships to the ancient seaport of Akaba, and then he told Allenby what Lawrence had said. The General sent for the youthful lieutenant, who looked very much like a Circassian girl in Arab costume.

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THE FRONDED PALMS AT AKABA, KING SOLOMON'S SEAPORT THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO, AND LAWRENCE'S BASE HEADQUARTERS DURING HIS SENSATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE TURKS IN HOLY ARABIA.

THE CAPTURE OF THIS FORMER TURKISH STRONGHOLD WAS ONE OF THE CLEVEREST FEATS OF THE WAR IN THE EAST. IT IS APPROACHED BY A PASS MORE DIFFICULT TO LEAD AN ARMY THROUGH THAN THE KHYBER PASS FROM INDIA INTO AFGHANISTAN. IT WAS DUE TO LAWRENCE'S STRATEGIC GENIUS THAT IT FELL.

They were surrounded by throngs of vociferous natives who were welcoming Allenby, when out of the mob stepped the undersized, barefooted, fair-faced man in Bedouin garb.

'What's this news you've brought?" said Allenby.

When Lawrence told him, the General was immensely pleased, because Akaba was the most important point on his right flank.

He saluted General Allenby, and in even, low tones, without any more expression on his face than if he were extending an invitation from the Sherif for dinner, reported that the Arabs had captured the seaport at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, where the great fleet of King Solomon rode at anchor nearly three thousand years ago. Lawrence gave all the credit of the victory to the Arabs, and made no reference whatever to the part that he had played in the affair. He conveyed the impression that he was acting as a courier, although, as a matter of fact, the capture of that important point was due almost entirely to his leadership and strategical genius.

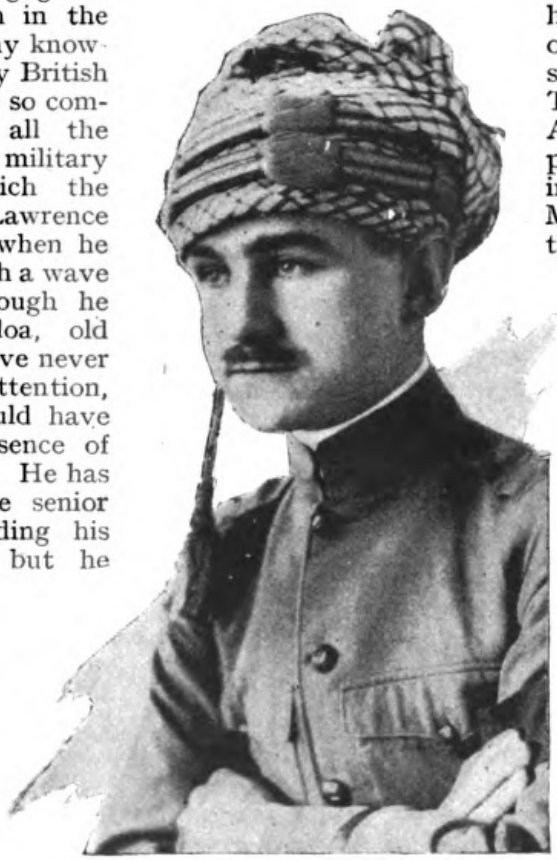
The most important Turkish base on the western coast of the Arabian peninsula was at Akaba, where one of the largest Turkish garrisons in the Near East was stationed. Before the Arabian army could advance north and unite with the British forces under Allenby in the campaign to liberate Northern Palestine and Syria, it was necessary for them to capture Akaba. As a result of Lawrence's visit to Egypt the British decided to co-operate more actively with the Arabs than they had done before. Lawrence was sent back to Akaba with unlimited power and resources. In less than seven months he attained such unexpected success that the British raised him in rank from a lieutenant to a colonel, and offered to make him a general, although he had had almost no military experience in his life and hardly knew the difference between "right incline" and "present arms."

HIS PERSONAL HABITS.

During the days I spent with Lawrence in Jerusalem, he wore nothing but Bedouin garb. He never seemed aware of the curiosity

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excited by his costume in the streets of the Holy City, for he was always engrossed in his own thoughts hundreds of miles or hundreds of centuries away. In Arabia he was never known to wear anything except the native costume. Occasionally, when he went to Cairo or Jerusalem to make a report to General Allenby, he wore the uniform of a British officer, but even after he attained the rank of colonel he preferred the uniform of second lieutenant, usually without insignia of any kind. I have seen him in the streets of Cairo without belt, and with unpolished boots—negligence next to high treason in the British Army. To my knowledge he was the only British officer in the war who so completely disregarded all the little precisions and military formalities for which the British are famous. Lawrence rarely saluted, and when he did it was simply with a wave of the hand, as though he were saying, "Halloa, old man," to a pal. I have never seen him stand to attention, and doubt if he would have done so in the presence of all the Allied rulers. He has never saluted anyone senior to him, even including his commander-in-chief, but he would always acknowledge salutes of soldiers. He especially disliked the title of colonel. From general to private, he was known as plain "Lawrence." Many times when we were trekking across the desert he told me that he thoroughly disliked war and everything that savoured of the military, and that as soon as the war was over he intended to leave the Army and go back to archæology.



MR. LOWELL THOMAS,

THE AUTHOR OF THIS NARRATIVE, WHOSE ILLUSTRATED "TRAVELOGUES" ON THE ARABIAN AND PALESTINE CAMPAIGNS DREW GREAT CROWDS AT COVENT GARDEN OPERA HOUSE, THE ALBERT HALL, AND ELSEWHERE.

Lawrence was no parlour conversationalist. He never said anything to anyone unless it was necessary to give instructions, or ask advice, or answer some direct question. Even in the heat of the Arabian campaign he sought solitude. Frequently I found him in his tent reading an archæological quarterly when the rest of the camp was worked up to fever pitch over the plan of attack for the night. He was so shy that when General Storrs or some other officer tried to compliment him on one of his wild expeditions into the desert, he would get red as a schoolgirl and look down at his feet. Although he had been cited for nearly every decoration that the British and French Governments had to offer, he sedulously ran away from them by camel, aeroplane, or any available method of swift transportation. The Duke of Connaught came out to Palestine to confer the Grand Cross of the Order of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem on General Allenby. He intended to give a decoration to Lawrence as well. The young leader of the Arabian army happened at the time to be out in the "blue" on a secret expedition blowing up Turkish trains; so General Allenby sent a fleet of aeroplanes across the Dead Sea into the desert to find him. Messages were dropped from the 'planes on every Arab camp over which they flew, requesting that if anyone saw Sherif Lawrence he should ask him to report to Jerusalem at once. So one fine day Lawrence came strolling in on foot through the Turkish lines, to show his utter scorn of the enemy. In the meantime the ceremony in Jerusalem had already taken place and the Duke of Connaught had gone to Egypt. Knowing Lawrence's peculiar aversion to the acceptance of medals or military honours of any kind, the British officials succeeded in getting him down to Cairo only by inventing some plausible pretext. Upon his arrival, a subaltern who was not acquainted with Lawrence's eccentricities inadvertently tipped him off to the fine affair that was to be staged for his benefit. Without stopping to pick up his uniform and kit at Shepheard's Hotel, Lawrence hurried to the Headquarters of the Royal Flying Corps at the oasis of Heliopolis a few miles from Cairo, jumped into an aeroplane, and taxied back to Arabia.

Little did Lawrence dream when he was studying Hittite ruins that it was his destiny to build a new empire instead of piecing together, for a scholar's thesis, the fragments of a dead and buried kingdom. Yet he gained the confidence of the Sherif of

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Mecca (King Hussein of the Hejaz) to such an extent that he was permitted to sign the King's name to State papers. Out of gratitude for his services to their country, the Arab leaders made him an Emir and a Prince of Mecca, an honour unparalleled in Arabian history. King Hussein himself presented his British commander with the curved gold sword, worn only by direct descendants of Mohammed.

Auda Abu Tayi, always sincere in his judgments of people, once said to me: "I have never seen a man who has such a great capacity for work as Lawrence. He is one of the finest camel drivers that ever trekked across the desert." A Bedouin can pay no finer compliment.

Lawrence won the admiration and undying devotion of the Arabs because of his understanding of them, through his proficiency in their dialects, and his rare knowledge of their religion, an inestimable factor in settling disputes between antagonistic factions, and even more, perhaps, because of his fearlessness and reckless courage, his ability to outdo them in nearly everything in which they themselves excelled. Rarely did he take them on an expedition that failed, but if, by some mischance, things did go wrong, he promptly took the same organization of Arabs on another expedition to convince them that there was no such thing as defeat. And in going into action against the Turks, Lawrence always charged at the head of his troops and was in the thick of every fight.

The Germans and Turks were not long in discovering that there was a mysterious power giving inspiration to the Arabs. Through their spies they learned that Lawrence was the guiding spirit of the whole Arabian revolution. They offered a reward of £100,000 for him, dead or alive. But would the Bedouins have betrayed their leader for all the gold in the fabled mines of Solomon? Was there a Judas among them? Would "thirty pieces of silver" tempt an Arab chieftain?

THE THRILLING EVENTS IN THE NEXT INSTALMENT.

In the next instalment Mr. Lowell Thomas will tell us how Colonel Lawrence was transformed from an archæologist into the world's champion train-wrecker.

One reason why the Germans and Turks offered rewards amounting to over £100,000 on the head of this shy Oxford scholar was because of the millions of pounds of damage which Lawrence and his wild Bedouins did along the Pilgrims' (or Hejaz) Railway, Turkey's only connecting link between Constantinople and the great Ottoman Army which remained in Medina until after the fall of Damascus and Aleppo.

During the Arabian campaign young Lawrence, the lover of Greek drama and Gothic architecture, blew up seventy-nine Turkish railway bridges and trains. He did more damage to the enemy lines of communication, took more prisoners single-handed, and captured more loot than any other single individual during the war. He studied the use of high explosives with the same zeal that he studied the Crusades for his Oxford thesis.

The act of slipping out from behind a sand dune after the passing of a Turkish mounted patrol along the Hejaz Railway, placing a charge of nitro-glycerine in a hole between the sleepers, and touching off the mine with an electric switch under the first Turkish train going by, Lawrence playfully termed "planting tulips."

He, of course, had scores of narrow escapes while engaged in such hazardous work—or sport, as he regarded it. On one occasion he touched off one of his "tulips" under a train carrying the Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish Army and a thousand officers and men. Lawrence escaped on his racing camel by a narrow margin. In the second instalment Mr. Lowell Thomas will describe in full this and many other of Lawrence's thrilling adventures.

He will also describe how Lawrence captured Akaba, the ancient seaport of King Solomon, and the battle of Abu-el-Lissan, in which the young archæologist and his daring Arab lieutenant, Auda Abu Tayi, the Bedouin Robin Hood, with a handful of followers mounted on racing camels and fleet Arabian steeds, charged a picked Turkish regiment and cut it to pieces. In this charge Lawrence's camel was shot from under him and his followers rode right over him, and seven bullets passed through Auda Abu Tayi's robes.

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The Duke of York's Column.

WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE WITH IT?

A SYMPOSIUM OF SCULPTORS.

TWO mighty stone columns dominate the West-end of London! One of them, the Nelson Column in Trafalgar Square, commemorates the life and death of the most typical of all British heroes, of the man, essentially English both in his greatness and his limitations, to whom his country owes (more than to any other man) the mastery of the seas. The other column, nearly as high, is the Duke of York's Column at the bottom of Regent Street, within a few hundred yards of the Nelson Column. It is one of those curious ironic facts, impossible in any other country but Great Britain, that while the Nelson Column repeats to every passer-by a story of victory and glory, the Duke of York's Column tells nothing to one out of every thousand people who pass it, and to the thousandth it tells a story that makes for blushes and laughter. The Duke of York, whose mighty statue rivals that of Nelson, did nothing of any account but lose battles, and it certainly is a unique distinction for a conquered general to have his effigy raised high into the heavens.

Frederick Augustus, Duke of York, was born on August 16th, 1762, and died on January 3rd, 1827. He was the second son of George III., and was his father's favourite. But all poor George III.'s sons were heartless and unnatural; and Frederick Augustus was no better than his brothers.

All the Georges and all their sons were essentially German, and in many respects Frederick Augustus was the most German of them all. Incidentally, when he was twenty-nine he married the Princess Frederica of Prussia.

In 1792 Great Britain began her long war against the French Republic, the war that continued long after the Republic had died, and Napoleon ruled France as Emperor. The Duke of York being the King's son, and having neither military experience nor capacity, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the English forces in Flanders. His business was to invade France from the north, and in this he was conspicuously unsuccessful. He was defeated at Dunkirk on September 7th, 1793, at Bois-le-Duc on September 14th, and at Boxtel on September 17th. All that is remembered of his disastrous campaign is that "the British Army swore dreadfully in Flanders," swearing, by the way, being an accomplishment in which Frederick Augustus and all his many brothers were notably proficient. As a reward for his failure the Duke of York was made a Field-Marshal by his doting father in 1795, and in 1798 was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the British Army. He had yet to add one more expensive failure to his record, for in the following year he commanded an army that was sent to the Continent to drive the French out of Holland, and was badly defeated at Alkmaar.



THE DUKE OF YORK'S COLUMN, WHICH OCCUPIES THE FINEST SITE IN LONDON.

He was satirized as the Miss-lead General on account of his liaison with Mrs. Mary Anne Clarke, who made money out of her intimacy with him by promising promotion to officers who paid her for her recommendations. There was a committee who took evidence on oath, and York was judged to have shown the most reprehensible carelessness in his dealings with Mrs. Clarke, but he could not be convicted of receiving money himself—although one hundred and ninety-six of the House of Commons believed him guilty.

In private life the Duke was a voluptuary. He spent much of his time in the Watier Club, and he gambled with the most reckless of the idle beaux of the Regency. Beau Brummell was one of his intimates. Charles Greville managed his racing stud. His duties at the Horse Guards did not prevent him sitting up till the small hours every day of his life. He drank as all

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men in his unpleasant set did drink in those days, and he finally, most appropriately, died of dropsy.

He was buried on a particularly bleak day. In order to prevent his feet from becoming cold and wet, the great Lord Eldon stood inside his hat during the ceremony at the graveside, and that is practically all that there is to be said concerning Frederick Augustus, Duke of York, loser of battles.

In 1831 his colleagues at the Horse Guards decided that so great a man should have a great and glorious monument. Carlton House, where George IV. held his raffish court during the Regency, had just been pulled down; Carlton House Terrace had just been built, and the new grand entrance into St. James's Park constructed, and it had been originally intended to fill the open space at the top of the steps with a fountain formed of the columns taken from the front of Carlton House. These columns, however, were used to support the portico of the National Gallery, and the Duke of York's Column, designed by Benjamin Wyatt, with the statue, the work of Sir Richard Westmacott, R.A., the leading sculptor of his day, took the place of the fountain. And there to this day stands the general who lost every battle that he fought, on a column a hundred and twenty-four feet high, and with a lightning conductor on top of his head. A contemporary joke on the completion of the monument was to inquire the use of the spike on top (the lightning conductor). "Why, to file his bills, of course!" The *Times* suggested that the names of his creditors should be cut on the shaft.

It is not generally known that there is a staircase inside the Duke of York's Column, as there is inside the Monument, but the Office of Works has for years declined to allow the public to climb this staircase and to survey London beside the German Prince who swore dreadfully in Flanders and did precious little else.

Now, the Duke of York's Column occupies what is, on the whole, the finest site in London. Everyone agrees that it is right and proper that London should have many memorials of the Great War that has just finished, and that it should contain permanent tributes to the men to whom we owe victory over the Germans. But times are hard, taxes are high, and labour and material are dear. It would, therefore, seem eminently wise and desirable to use the Duke of York's Column either for a figure of Victory or one of the heroes of the Great War, and not a stupid, drunken German Prince. Pull Frederick Augustus down and erect in his place a statue of Haig or Beatty, or, perhaps best of all, of Foch.

A representative of THE STRAND MAGAZINE submitted this idea to various well-known sculptors, and his report is as follows:—

MR. F. W. POMEROY, A.R.A., was the first to favour me with his views:—

"Æsthetically it is a mistake to place a *portrait* statue on the top of a column two hundred feet high." (In point of fact the elevation of the Duke of York's Column is less than one hundred and thirty feet.)

"The ancient Greeks never placed their sculpture in positions where they could not be properly seen. A portrait statue is an intimate representation of some particular person and should be so shown as to come within the ordinary vision of the spectator.

"The statue of the Duke of York is not a thing of beauty and has now no interest to anyone; personally I should be glad to see it removed, and with it, the column, which might be re-erected on some prominent elevation such as Primrose Hill, where it would, if surmounted by a statue (gilded) symbolizing 'Victory,' form an admirable memorial for our soldiers who fell in the Great War.

"The present site would then be available for a fine modern work of art, such as the National Memorial to our beloved King Edward VII., which is, at present, without a resting place.

"It is no wonder that the average citizen regards with distrust any suggestion to erect a new public memorial when they are only able to see the awful productions of the last century in the squares and public places.

"Our sculptors are judged by *these* works, but we have now a number of accomplished and well-trained sculptors who could create works equal to any foreign artists, if they were given the opportunity.

"Therefore I would hail with pleasure the prospect of the speedy removal of many of the bronze figures which disfigure our public streets, and in their places I should like to see specimens of modern British sculpture."

MR. F. DERWENT WOOD, A.R.A., with whom I discussed the matter in his studio at Glebe Place, Chelsea, heartily agreed with the proposed deposition of the Duke of York.

"But I do not like the idea," he added, "of replacing it by another statue, which viewed from the street would be almost invisible and quite ineffective. There is, of course, the Nelson precedent, but in his case the one-armed figure is fairly distinctive. In my opinion the present statue should be replaced by a big symbolical figure, commemorating the war in some way, which would be silhouetted against the sky. The

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HOW THE COLUMN WOULD LOOK WITH THE RAILINGS REMOVED AND THE STATUE OF THE DUKE OF YORK REPLACED BY A FIGURE SYMBOLIZING VICTORY.

colour would be immaterial, as under the influence of the London climate any colour would become flat. Such a figure as I have in view can be seen on the top of the Cathedral at Toledo and various other places.

"If I remember rightly, there are panels around the column, and these might be filled in with decorative designs, or you might have a group of statuary at the base consisting, perhaps, of the Commanders-in-Chief of the principal Allied Armies.

"Let me add that, as embodying London's commemoration of our victory in the Great War, I do not think your proposal would be adequate in itself. I should like to see a Memorial Colonnade erected on the terrace—the Spaniards Road, I think it is called—on Hampstead Heath. It is a magnificent site for such a piece of sculptural architecture."

MR. W. R. COLTON, A.R.A., when I called upon him at his Kensington studio, treated the subject in a somewhat flippant and cynical manner.

"Is it safe to revise the verdicts of history in the way you suggest? People of to-day don't think much of the Duke of York, perhaps, but at the time the statue was erected something must have been thought of him or it would not have been put up. The column as it stands has historic significance, it is a memorial of the state of feeling at a particular period; nothing can alter that fact. You suggest that Foch should replace the Duke of York, but what guarantee have you that another generation might not want to pull down Foch?

"Where is the thing to end if you once begin tampering with these memorials of the past? Are you going to impose a censorship on all our London statues? There are others to which the same objection might be taken as you have taken to the Duke of York's statue.

"No; in my opinion statues once erected are for all time, and it is unsafe in regard to them to act on the feelings of the moment. For the rest, I consider the Duke of York's column to be a fine piece of work and a suitable adornment of the site it occupies."

Similar ideas were expressed by SIR THOMAS BROCK, R.A., although in his case the conversation was prefaced by the plea that he was too unwell—he was about to undergo a serious operation — to give much attention to the matter, and was too old—he is seventy-one—to engage in public controversy.

"I should prefer," Sir Thomas said, "to leave the matter in the hands of younger men. Generally speaking, however, I am not in favour of pulling down things, and I do not think a new statue should ever be put upon an old pedestal. We must have in London a much finer memorial of Victory and Peace than your proposal could possibly provide —some grand and comprehensive scheme which would express as adequately as may be possible our feelings and emotions with respect to the heroes who died for us in the war."

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It was worth the journey to Wimbledon Hill, where MR. ALFRED DRURY, R.A., has carried on his profession for the past six years, to see the enthusiasm with which he welcomed the project.

"I think you have hit upon a first-rate idea," he exclaimed, at the outset of our conversation. "The column certainly ought to be utilized for a better purpose than it serves at present, and what better purpose can there be than that which THE STRAND MAGAZINE suggests?

"The column, in my judgment, is of distinct artistic merit, and to replace it by anything as good at the present time would cost an enormous amount of money. After consideration, I have come to the conclusion that the best thing would be to replace the Duke of York's effigy by an ideal figure symbolizing 'Peace' and 'Victory,' and resting upon a globe. There, this will show you what I have in mind."

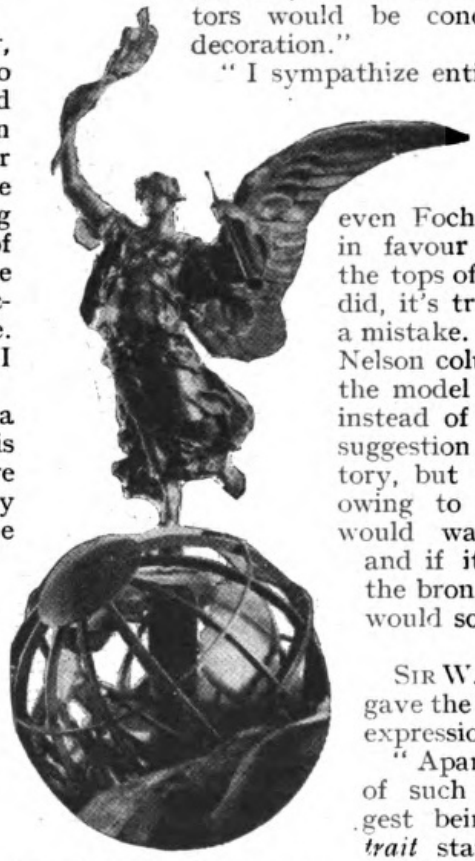
And Mr. Drury pointed to a little statuette in bronze on his mantelpiece. It was a miniature model of the figure of Victory which decorates Gilbert's statue of Queen Victoria at Winchester.

"The figure should be in gilt," continued the sculptor. "If it were of the proper material it would stand the London climate very well; and in any case there are steps to the top of the column, and the renewal of the gilt from time to time would be a comparatively simple and inexpensive matter, very different from what it would be if scaffolding had to be erected."

I asked Mr. Drury if he could embody his ideas of an appropriate figure in a rough pencil sketch.

"No," he replied. "I think that would be a mistake. First get the principle of your proposal accepted by the public before we go into details. Otherwise there will be all kinds of criticism, and the proposal itself may be prejudiced by opposition to the details.

'In addition to the symbolical figure on the top, the sides of the column might be decorated in bas-relief. There is an excellent example of this in the City 'Monument' of the Great Fire. You might also have a group of statuary at the base, if, as I believe, there is enough space for such a purpose. This statuary might embody representations of the countries forming the Great Alliance in the war, or possibly symbolize the League of Nations, if the ideal of the League is realized."



MR. ALFRED DRURY, R.A., SUGGESTS THAT THE COLUMN SHOULD BE SURMOUNTED BY A FIGURE, RESTING ON A GLOBE, SYMBOLICAL OF "PEACE" AND "VICTORY," SUCH AS THIS "VICTORY" WHICH DECORATES GILBERT'S STATUE OF QUEEN VICTORIA AT WINCHESTER.

SIR GEORGE FRAMPTON, R.A., was reluctant to discuss the subject, because he considered that it was one for architects rather than sculptors. "The question of the structure of the column, at least," he remarked, "is an architect's question; sculptors would be concerned only with its decoration."

"I sympathize entirely with your views," Sir George nevertheless admitted; only I don't want to see a foreigner there—not even Foch. Nor am I altogether in favour of putting statues on the tops of columns. The Romans did, it's true; but I think it was a mistake. How much better the Nelson column would look if it had the model of his ship on the top, instead of the figure. I like the suggestion of a gilt figure of Victory, but I am afraid the gilt, owing to the London climate, would want constant renewal; and if it was done in bronze, the bronze, for the same reason, would soon become black."

SIR W. GOSCOMBE JOHN, R.A., gave the following brief but terse expression of his views:—

"Apart from the likelihood of such a change as you suggest being made, I think *portrait* statues are never happy or desirable on the top of high columns. A great winged figure of Victory in the place of the Duke of York would give us all a new joy and be a delight to look at—a golden Victory that would catch the sunshine like the Cross on the dome of St. Paul's."

Having regard to the important contributions he has made of recent years to the Royal Academy, and his residence in this country, I thought it not improper to approach MR. WALTER WINANS, the American sculptor, for his opinion on the matter. His reply was as follows:—

"As a citizen of the United States of America I am not permitted to meddle in the politics of any other country. Personally, I am utterly indifferent as to who acts as lightning conductor perched on this column. From a purely

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sculptor's point of view, I should prefer nobody was.

"From a utilitarian point of view it would be best if there were a socket put on top into which the statue of whatever man happened to be popular at the moment could be fitted.

"If it is decided to remove the column, I should suggest that the steps also be removed, the ground graded, and a road made joining the bottom of Regent Street with the Processional Road which runs from Buckingham Palace to Trafalgar Square. This would relieve the traffic in Piccadilly, etc.'

MR. JOHN TWEED, the sculptor of Clive, Rhodes, Chamberlain, and other Imperial leaders, agreed that it was desirable to find another use for so noble a site as that occupied by the Duke of York's Column.

But he did not approve of the proposal to replace the statue by that of another human figure, this for much the same reasons as had been given by other sculptors. In fact, he was rather in favour of removing the column altogether and using the site for quite a new memorial.

"It might commemorate," he said, "the part taken by the Empire as a whole in the War, something of the kind of which this is a rough sketch."

"This," to which Mr. Tweed directed my attention in his Fulham Road studio, was a rough sketch in clay of his design for a War Memorial in South Africa. It was a rounded column, the summit of which, with a figure of Victory, was reached by a circular stairway. At the entrance to this statuary stood a figure sounding the call to arms, whilst in a series of recesses were sculptured panels representing the various Dominions overseas.

"Such a memorial," he admitted, "would, of course, be somewhat costly—but nothing cheap can be worthy of the occasion—and it should not be one man's work. I think some of the younger men should have a chance, each contributing his part in accordance, of course, with the general design."

Failing such a scheme, Mr. Tweed thought that possibly the effigy of the Duke of York might be replaced by a piece of statuary in honour of France as our Great Ally; "The Gallic Cock, or, better still, the figure of an eagle in heroic size and cast in bronze, so as to be of visible significance to the man in the street."

Summing up the discussion, it will be seen that the weight of opinion on the part of these distinguished sculptors favours the deposition of the Duke of York from the site he has too long usurped, but is hostile to the idea of replacing his effigy by another portrait statue. It recognizes the suitability of the site and the utility of the column for the erection of some piece of ideal sculpture which would symbolize the Victory and Peace resulting from the Great War. Supplementing THE STRAND MAGAZINE'S proposal, one or two eminent sculptors also suggest the further use of the site for the erection either of portrait statues of the Commanders who achieved the victory, or of symbolical statuary in honour of the nations which were united together in the struggle.

Result of the Second Sense of Humour Competition.

The order of Merit of the ten Caricatures, as shown by the voting, is as follows:—

1st. GEORGE GRAVES, by *H. M. Bateman.*
2nd. MELBOURNE INMAN, by *Tom Webster.*
3rd. A. J. BALFOUR, by *Tom Titt.*
4th. PADEREWSKI, by *Max Beerbohm.*
5th. W. REDMOND, by *E. T. Reed.*
6th. Sir HENRY IRVING, by *Alick P. F. Ritchie.*
7th. TOLSTOY, by *Olaf Gulbransson.*
8th. SARAH BERNHARDT, by *Ernest Forbes.*
9th. I. ZANGWILL, by *Stone.*
10th. Sir EDWARD CARSON, by *Frank Richardson.*

Only one list was received placing all the Caricatures in this order. This was sent in by

Mr. M. ROBINSON, 43, New Walk, Leicester,

to whom is awarded

THE FIRST PRIZE OF £100.

Two competitors sent in lists with only two mistakes, and they therefore divide the Second Prize of £25. Their names and addresses are:—

Mr. J. E. BENDALL, Villa Cross, Birmingham.
Mr. M. BORTON BROWN, 79, Clarence Gate Gardens, N.W.1.

Prizes of £5 each are awarded to

Mr. W. ROBERTS, 497, Cambridge Road, London, N.E.
Mr. R. TAYLOR, 226, Bishopsgate, E.C.2.

for lists with three mistakes.

The following nine competitors, with lists containing four mistakes, each receive a prize of £1 13s. 4d.: Mr. H. C. BAYLEY, Plaxtole, Castletown, Isle of Man; Miss MARIE OLGA BONAVIA, 331, Sda San Paola, Valetta, Malta; Mr. S. A. F. EGERTON, Wellesley House, Wellington College, Berks; Miss GEORGIE ESMOND, Apollo Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1; Mr. DENIS FINN, 19, Abercorn Road, Londonderry, Ireland; Mr. R. C. HARRIS, Stafford House, Baring Road, Grove Road, S.E.12; Mr. W. D. TRESIDDER, 17, Hartington Street, Derby; Mr. P. F. MILLARD, St. Aidan's Vicarage, Carlisle, Cumberland; Mr. FRANK H. WHITELAND, 16, Dorien Road, Raynes Park, S.W.19.

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A RETURN ENGAGEMENT

By WALTER PRICHARD EATON

Illustrated by E F SHERIE

WAS it twelve years ago, or fifteen? Roger Brigham could not distinctly remember. The spot, however, was not much changed, save that it had shrunk a little. There was the same small railway station, even the same conveyances to take guests to the hotels. To be sure, one or two of the larger inns now had motor-buses, but Roger climbed into an ancient carriage by choice. He had come back to Sandbourne after twelve years (or was it fifteen ?) not to ride in new motor-buses, but to find, if he could, some of those old-time moods and fancies which had made the place so sweet. He was on a sentimental pilgrimage in search of his youth. That is a way of stating that Roger Brigham was thirty-five, and conveys at least a hint that he was single. Some time between thirty-five and forty a man makes up his mind finally that the quest is vain, and becomes reconciled to growing old. Before thirty-five a man doesn't know he has lost his youth. But midway in the thirties he suddenly discovers the loss with an aching pang of regret, and if he is foot and fancy free he sets out on a foolish, wistful, sentimental quest.

Roger turned to Sandbourne because it was holiday time, and because there, in glorious seasons in the past—the past so infinitely remote !—he had walked beside the summer sea with soft hands in his, while fairies danced on the moon-track. There he had first read Omar and Keats ; he had swum straight out to sea, or paddled a canoe over the long heave of the sea-billows ; he had played tennis and danced—in short, he had been gloriously young ! He wanted to be gloriously young again.

It was the same strip of shining yellow beach. The hotel looked familiar too. It had been altered and enlarged, under a new management, but the office remained as of old, with tennis-rackets, golf-bags, hammocks, and crochet-baskets left about in confusion.

"I used to come here twelve or fifteen years ago," Roger told the clerk, who did not seem impressed.

After he had got into his flannels, Roger went out to the tennis court and watched a mixed-doubles match. He had forgotten the court was so poor and bumpy. The tennis, too, was not impressive, not half so good as his own, he thought. He strolled to the beach, wondering if he had time for a swim before supper, and deciding not. Presently, as he turned to go back to the hotel, he saw a distant figure moving from the rocky point towards a cottage. There was something oddly familiar about the figure ; it struck a chord in his memory with a sudden throb. Then he knew : it was like Mabel Atwood ! It was so like her that he was tempted to run, to shout. Yet he could hardly reach her in time, and his voice wouldn't carry over the roar of the surf. Besides, he told himself, it was probably a trick of recollection. Scenes revisited put such fancied resemblances into the mind. But he went back to the hotel thinking of Mabel Atwood, of those far-off, forgotten, rosy hours when they had wandered together by this bit of sea ; and he asked the clerk if any person of her name had a cottage by the point. The clerk said no, he knew of no such person in the four years he had been at Sandbourne. Roger felt his glow of hope fade out. He realized that he had never really forgotten Mabel, that she had been an important, a lovely part of this lost youth he was seeking.

That night he went to the weekly hop at the Casino. He called it a hop, though the young folks didn't any more. With the easy familiarity of such a resort, he had picked up acquaintance with several people at the supper table, and he went with them, devoting himself especially to a jolly young girl of twenty or so who promised him the first dance when he said he was an old man without a chance of a partner.

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"*Everybody* dances nowadays," she told him. "It isn't only the young people."

This was discouraging; he hadn't expected to be taken so literally. He endeavoured to become flirtatious in order to prove his youth, but only succeeded in feeling rather silly, and suspecting that the girl thought him so too.

But she was true to her promise, and danced the first dance with him, after introducing him to a perfect bevy of pink and white and blue and yellow fluffinesses. When the dance was over, he saw that his companion longed to join her crowd on the veranda, and he let her go. He watched the laughing girls and boys filing out to the moonlit porch and felt very aged. He was thirty-five, and only a man of thirty-five can know how old he felt! A man of fifty, even of forty, has mercifully forgotten. He had no heart to hunt a partner for the next dance, and was contemplating a lonely walk by the sea, with his memories, when across the room he saw again that familiar figure. She was standing in the door, half in profile, and he could not be mistaken at this distance. It *was* Mabel Atwood! The clerk was wrong. Perhaps she was visiting. He sprang up and hurried across the slippery floor, speaking her name. The woman—the girl, for she was a girl to him—turned quickly and met his eager eyes. At first there was no recognition on her face, but he took off his glasses with a smile, and suddenly two bright spots came in her cheeks—how well he remembered that trick of her clear skin!—and she put out her hand with a little cry of welcome.

"Roger—you!" she said.

They both spoke the inevitable "What are you doing here?" at once, and each waited for the other's answer. Meanwhile Roger forgot to let go of her hand, and she had to draw it from his eager grasp.

"I'm here with my aunt; we have a little cottage by the point," she said. "We—we've not been here for a dozen years. It isn't much changed, is it?"

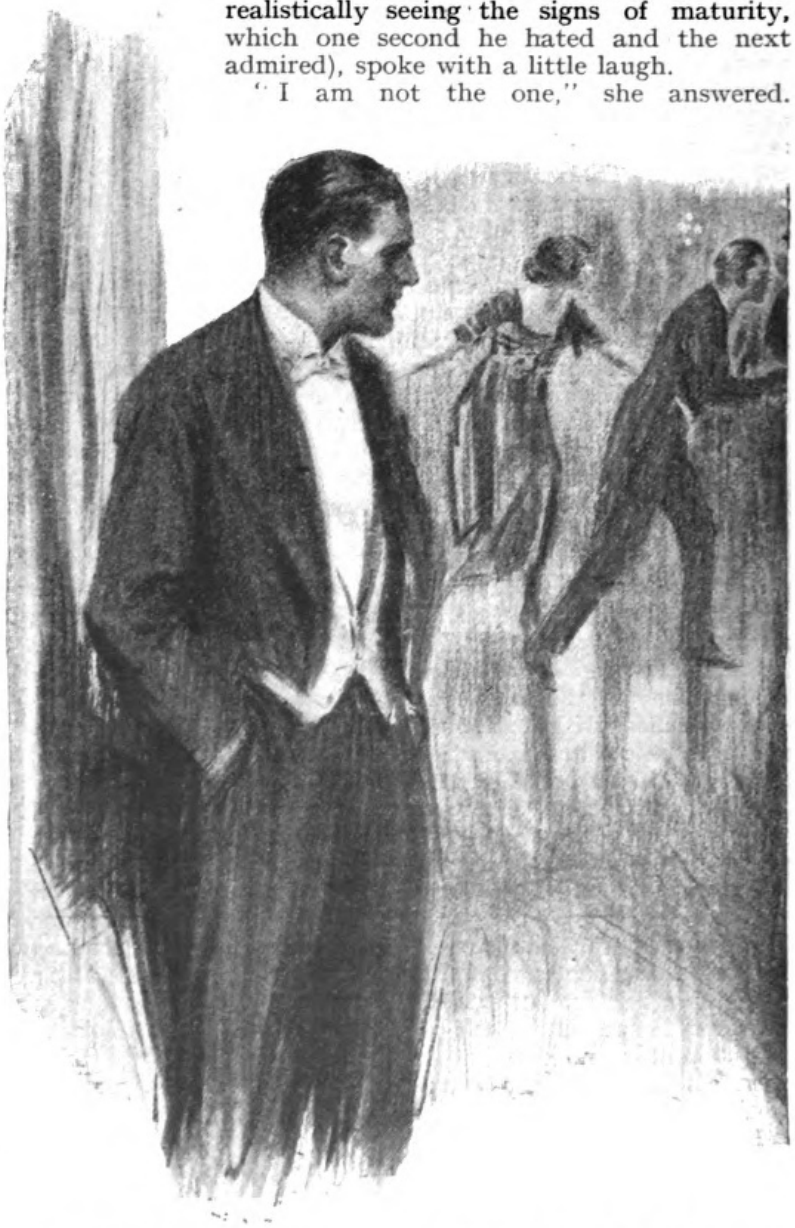
"Not now—now that I've found you!" Roger exclaimed. "Before that! I've not been here for more than a dozen years, either, I think—anyhow, since the last summer I saw you. I came back looking for something."

"Looking for something?"

"Yes—my youth. I woke up one day this spring and found I wasn't young any more. Somebody had taken my youth from me in the night. I've come back here to find it. Maybe you can help!"

The girl, the woman (which was she? Roger looked at her and could not tell, seeing her strangely as she used to be, and yet more realistically seeing the signs of maturity, which one second he hated and the next admired), spoke with a little laugh.

"I am not the one," she answered.



"HE WATCHED THE LAUGHING GIRLS AND BOYS FILING OUT TO HE WAS THIRTY-FIVE, AND ONLY A MAN OF THIRTY-

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"Those little pink puff-balls on the veranda are the age we were when—when—well, they are young. Go and dance with them."

"I've tried," said Roger. "I can't make out whether they are patronizing me or pitying me—it's one or the other, and I don't like it. Alas! I can't speak their peculiar language any more."

"You *have* changed," she smiled.

"That is a little unkind."

"Is it? I thought it would flatter you," she said, and shot him a sidelong glance.

Roger coloured and the girl smiled again. "Let's dance," she said. "I'm old enough to ask you now."

The young folks were streaming back to the strains of a one-step, and the man and the woman joined the bobbing throng. A thousand memories awoke in him as his hand clasped her waist, and he wanted to draw her close to him, as he used to do in the slower and more languid waltzes of their early days.

"Your hair smells just the same," he whispered in her ear.

She lifted her face to his for a second, inquiringly, and then averted it from his glance.

"You don't really remember," she whispered back.

"Yes, I do! We waltzed in those days to beautiful music—not this mechanical ragtime. We belong almost to the age of the 'Blue Danube,' you and I. Your knee used to touch mine, and it thrilled me——"

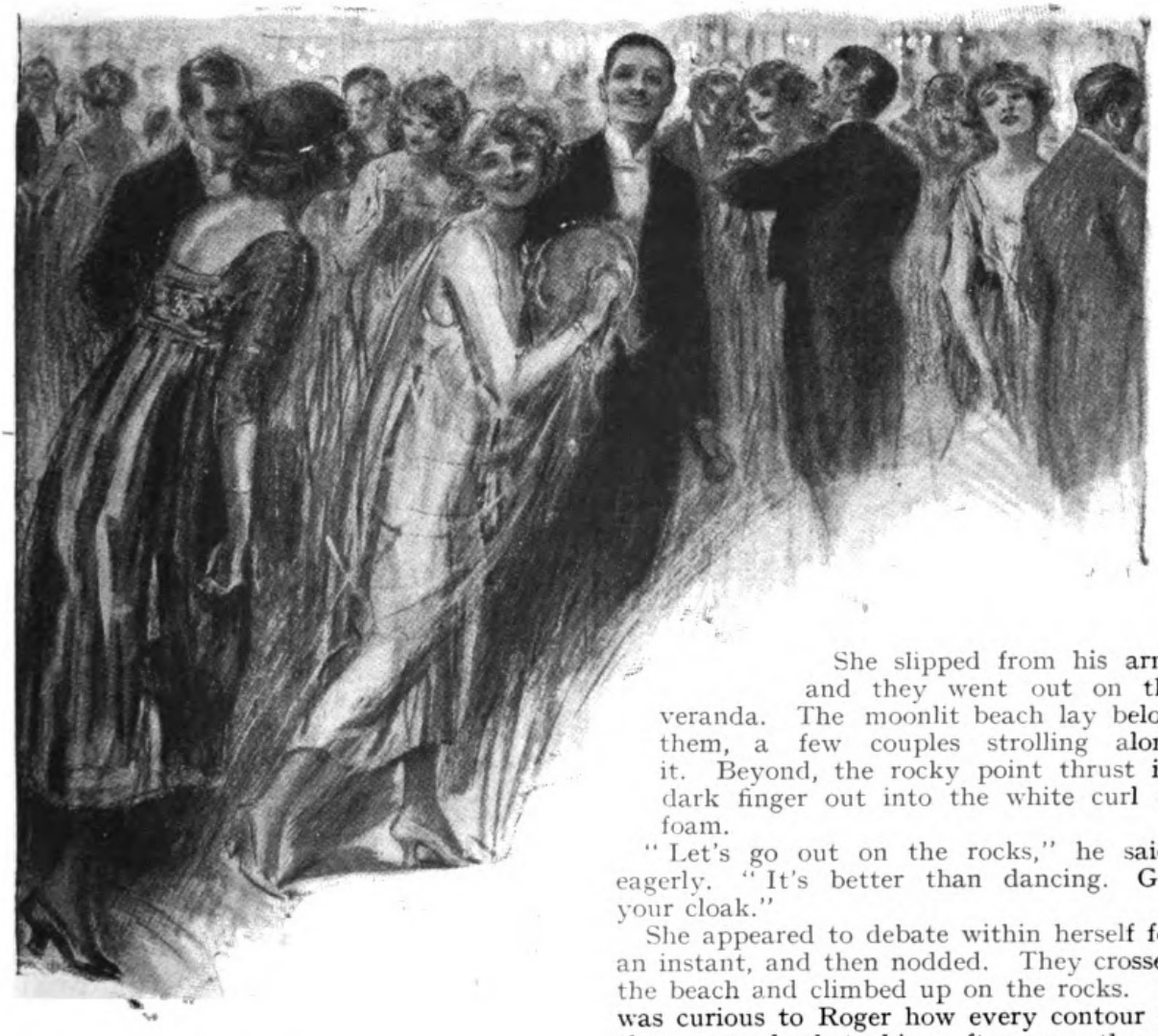
"Roger, don't! You mustn't!"

"But it's true; you know it's true."

"Is it? I don't remember," she said. "But I remember the music was better than this. We used to seem to float."

"To float—yes! Perhaps we are heavier now."

She laughed. "I'm afraid we are," she said. "Let's stop."



THE MOONLIT PORCH AND FELT VERY AGED. FIVE CAN KNOW HOW OLD HE FELT!"

She slipped from his arm, and they went out on the veranda. The moonlit beach lay below them, a few couples strolling along it. Beyond, the rocky point thrust its dark finger out into the white curl of foam.

"Let's go out on the rocks," he said, eagerly. "It's better than dancing. Get your cloak."

She appeared to debate within herself for an instant, and then nodded. They crossed the beach and climbed up on the rocks. It was curious to Roger how every contour of them came back to him, after more than a decade. Without the slightest hesitancy his feet took him by the best path directly out

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to the farthest point. The spot was deserted; everyone was at the dance.

"You haven't forgotten how to get here," she said, with a shade of nervousness in her laugh.

"I've forgotten nothing," he answered, curling up beside her.

"Nothing?" She shot him a sidelong glance.

"Not a thing," said he. "It was here, on these rocks, with you, that I used to ache with the beauty of the moon-track, and when a little cloud dusked the moon, the ocean and all the night seemed to hold its breath. Oh, Mabel, why can't I ache any more in the face of loveliness?"

He looked up at her seriously, and she looked at him, in silence. She seemed to be studying his face.

"Something goes with youth, doesn't it?" she answered, presently. "But something comes, too."

"What?"

"You'll find out when you are as old as I," she said.

Roger laughed. "You are two years younger than I," said he. "Besides, I don't believe you ever ached. How well I remember once apostrophizing a cloud that crossed the moon as 'a veil that shrouded the golden queen of the skies,' and you said it looked more like a piece of cotton-wool. I don't believe you really had any poetry in your soul, or you couldn't have said that."

"Perhaps I wanted to douse your exaltation," she smiled.

"But why should you want to do that?"

"Perhaps I was afraid of it," said she.

"Afraid of it? I don't understand."

The girl only laughed softly.

"I remember once quoting Keats's 'Bright Star,' which I had just learned by heart," he went on, "and you doused me again. Girls have no sense of poetry beyond the personal."

"Are you sure that wasn't personal?" she asked, her voice low.

"It was—and it wasn't," Roger answered, reflectively. "It was speaking for me my new-found sense of magic loveliness and romance. I was in love with life, in love with love; I was drunk with the moonlight and all those vague, sweet things of youth. I don't say I wasn't in love with you, too."

"Please don't say you weren't," she answered, half laughingly, half with a wistful soberness. "You talk, Roger, as if your youth, your power of feeling, were really gone. That can't be true. The world has done nothing like that to you, I'm sure."

"But it is true," said he. "It's just one of those inevitable things we have to face."

"Nonsense!" she replied. "It isn't true for me, at any rate. I am older than you, and younger. Perhaps we've changed places now. It is I who am in love with romance and loveliness and moonlight."

"And love?" he queried, looking at her.

"Every woman is in love with love to the end of her life."

A fleecy cloud dusked the moon as they spoke, and the moon-track, the restless sea, even the ghostly choirs of the surf, seemed to hold their breath.

Roger broke the silence.

"What is that cloud like to you now?" he said.

"Like a wistful thought of reality dusking a dream," she answered.

The man shot a quick look at her, surprised and delighted.

"Beautiful!" he whispered. "See, it has gone."

"Yes, it has gone," she said, in the same low tone.

He studied her face in profile as she looked out over the golden pathway. Her eyes were deeper now than they used to be, her chin firmer. Yes, he had to admit the hint of a second chin, too. But her nose was tipped in the same provocative way, and her full, sweet lips parted a little in repose. The lips of his first love! Yes, she was really his first love, for she had come to him as a part of the opening world of moonlight and romance. He wondered suddenly if he had ever really loved again. He had thought so, times enough; but never again had the ache of loveliness and the longing to hold the beloved close come at the same time, in the moonlight glamour of romance. Those lips, he had kissed them once—how sweet they were!

The woman felt his eyes upon her, and slowly turned her face, meeting his sudden, hungry glance. She turned quickly away again.

"Look," she said, "the gold fairies are dancing on the floor of the ocean."

"The fairies are dancing on the floor of my heart," he whispered. "They have found my youth, and brought him out, and he is footing it gaily. He is a nice chap, too. I like him very much, for he is a poet. Oh, moonlight and starlight and gold-gleaming waters, how you cry to the heart of youth and make him immortal!"

"I knew it!" she said.

Roger drew closer to her and took her hand in one of his. She shot him a quick, questioning glance, endeavouring to withdraw her fingers, but he held them firm, and with a little laugh she ceased to resist.

"Your cloak used always to be slipping off," he whispered in her ear, "and had to be put on again—like this."

With his other hand he tucked it about her, and she felt his arm fold around her waist and draw her close to his side.

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She did not laugh now. She looked into his eyes a second with a deep inquiry, and then they both gazed out to sea, over the golden pathway where the fairies danced, to the mystery of the moon.

"I wonder," he said. "I wonder—— "

"Yes?"

"I wonder what would have happened if, long ago, you and I had never parted. We were children by a summer sea. We went our separate ways into the world. I wonder—— "

"We shouldn't be sitting here, like this," she smiled.

"Oh, yes, we should—I'm sure we should!" he cried. "Just like this, after fifteen years. Fifteen years! They seem suddenly empty to me now."

His arm tightened about her. He looked into her face hungrily, and leaned to kiss her lips.

But she put up her free hand quickly and gently withheld him.

"No, dear Roger," she said, "not that!"

"Yes, please! I'm—I'm aching again! Something has been restored to me. I think it is love for you. Why not? Please!"

She shook her head. "It—it is too serious," she answered. "The kisses you give at eighteen, you don't give at thirty-three."

"You mean you don't want to give?"

She looked at him with an odd, hurt expression, which thrilled him—thrilled and sobered.

"Roger, you were my first love," she said, simply.

"And you were mine," he answered. "They say no woman ever forgets her first love, and no woman ever marries him. I believe it's the same with a man. But I don't see why. Mabel—— "

He was carried out of himself. A rosy vision suddenly opened before him. His voice and his arm trembled.

"Tell me," he cried. "They said at the hotel there was no one here of your name. You haven't changed your name, have you?"

"It is Bolton now," she answered. "You silly boy, if you ever noticed things you would have seen."

She put out her hand in the moonlight and showed the ring.

"It—it never occurred to me," he stammered. "I—I beg your pardon."

He withdrew his arm from her waist.

But she put it back with a low laugh. "*I* knew it all the time," she said. "If I permitted it before, I must permit it now."

"But your—— "

"He is far away," she replied.

"Still, it—it's not the same. I wouldn't feel—I'd be a—— "

Again he tried to draw his arm away, and this time she let him.

"My husband has been dead eight years," she said. "We were married only two."

Roger took her hand again and spread his other palm over it. "Poor girl!" said he. "I'm so sorry. There is something in your eyes—I wondered what it was. Will you forgive me for running on about our childhood fancies?"

"I couldn't have forgiven you if you hadn't," she answered him. "I'm getting old now, too, Roger, and I really came here this summer because old memories called me. It has been very sweet to live in them again, if only for an hour."

"Need it be only for an hour?" he said, eagerly. "The whole world has changed for me in this hour. I have found the dreams of my youth again, and they are all tangled up with you—your hair, your eyes, your lips. I think, dearest, without knowing it, I have been wanting you for fifteen years. Could you forget what has happened enough to come back with me into the long ago, and start afresh?"

"I could forget it, perhaps, better than you could," she answered.

"I don't understand."

"Don't you? Then you are a dear boy," said she, letting her cheek lightly brush his shoulder. "Listen, Roger, to something I am going to tell you. I was married for two years. You have never been married, have you? You cannot know what that means. It means such an intimacy as only beautiful, romantic love can justify. I thought I loved the man I married, but I—I didn't; not that way. I wonder sometimes how many wives do. Oh, we plunge into strange waters, we women, without knowing the depths! If they don't love that way, something is taken from them, something that corresponds to what you call your youth, perhaps, or your power to ache. A bloom is rubbed off the world. I can't put it into words."

She was silent, and Roger stroked her hand.

"Tell me," he said, "for we must hide nothing now, whether I—whether we—if our first love long ago was the kind that carries the bloom into the intimacy of marriage."

She nodded her head. "Of course," she said. "We kissed as naturally as the wind blew, and our love was all in a golden light—wasn't it? Oh, say that it was, Roger! Say there *is* something like that in the world—something *real!*"

"Yes, dearest," he whispered. "A thousand times, yes!"

She suddenly put her hands about his head and held his face buried on her bosom, while he felt rather than heard her sob.

When he felt her clasp relax, he slipped to his knees beside her.

"Dearest," he said, "I never felt so weak and unworthy and humble in my life, and

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"'I'LL SEE YOU AS YOU USED TO BE, AND AS YOU ARE, YOU LOVELY CREATURE,' HE LAUGHED, SPRINGING UP AND CATCHING HER INTO HIS ARMS."

yet I never felt so proud and so gloriously happy, with a happiness that is clutching my heart like a hand. The world—no, not the world—*I* owe you something. It isn't too late! Let us pick up our dear dead dreams together, let us put back all the gold upon them; let us never part again. Oh, all these years—these empty years—and you out there, my one true mate!"

"You—you don't mind the—the other? You'll see me as I used to be?" she said.

"I'll see you as you used to be, and as you are, you lovely creature," he laughed, springing up and catching her into his arms. "Oh, if I hadn't found you!"

"And you've not even asked if I have any children."

"I hope you have. I love children, and you'd have been so lonely all these years without them."

"I have been lonely," she answered. "I want children. I want a girl, so she too may sit on a rock by the summer sea, and be dreadfully, wonderfully, thrillingly afraid!"

"And I want a son to sit on a rock by the summer sea and look down the moon-track into the golden land of Heart's Desire," said Roger. "Oh, tell me it isn't too late!"

He strained her closer to his side, and in silence they looked up the golden pathway to the moon, their hearts too full for speech.

A long time later they rose, and moved back to the beach. The lights were still ablaze in the Casino, and as they stepped down on the sand the sounds of a waltz struck up.

"It must be the final dance," she said. "Listen—do you hear what it is?"

"The beautiful 'Blue Danube'!" cried Roger. "Dear old anachronism—how do you suppose they happened to dig up that?"

"It's in our honour," she laughed. "Come, dear—we must dance it."

"We'll float!" he cried. "And your knee shall touch mine, and we shall thrill to our finger-tips! You are eighteen, and I am twenty, and the wide world is before us!"

He seized her in his arms, and for the first time kissed her lips, his eyes closed in a yearning tenderness of memory and hope. Then they ran together up the steps and moved out upon the floor.

Yet to the laughing boys and girls around them they were two rather elderly people who danced in a peculiar, old-fashioned manner.

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The Uncharted Coast



No. II.—A NEW LIGHT ON OLD CRIMES.

by

A. CONAN DOYLE

PSYCHIC science, though still in its infancy, has already reached a point where we can dissect many of those occurrences which were regarded as inexplicable in past ages, and can classify and even explain them—so far as any ultimate explanation of anything is possible. So long as gravity, electricity, magnetism, and so many other great natural forces are inexplicable one must not ask too much of the youngest—though it is also the oldest—of the sciences. But the progress made has been surprising—the more surprising since it has been done by a limited circle of students whose results have hardly reached the world at large, and have been greeted rather with incredulous contempt than with the appreciation which they deserved. So far have we advanced that of the eighty or ninety cases carefully detailed in Dale Owen's "Footfalls," published in 1859, we find now, sixty years later, that there is hardly one which cannot be classified and understood. It would be interesting, therefore, to survey some of those cases which stand on record in our law courts, and have been variously explained in the past as being either extraordinary coincidences or as interpositions of Providence. The latter phrase may well represent a fact, but people must learn that no such thing has ever been known as an interposition of Providence save through natural law, and that when it has seemed inexplicable and miraculous it is only because the law has not yet been understood. All miracles come under exact law, but the law, like all natural laws, is itself divine and miraculous.

We will endeavour in recounting these cases, which can only be done in the briefest fashion, to work from the simpler to the more complex—from that which may have depended upon the natural but undefined powers of the subconscious self, through all the range of clairvoyance and telepathy, until we come to that which is beyond all question influenced by the spirit of the dead. There is one case, that of Owen Parfitt, of Shepton Mallet, in Somersetshire, which may form a starting-point, since it is really impossible to say whether it was psychic or not; but if it were not, it forms one of the most piquant mysteries which ever came before the British public.

This old fellow was a seaman, who lived in the piratical days of the eighteenth century and finally settled down, upon what were usually considered to have been ill-gotten gains, about the year 1760, occupying a comfortable cottage on the edge of the little Somerset town. His sister kept house for him, but she was herself too infirm to look after the rheumatic old mariner, so a neighbour named Susanna Snook used to come in by the day and help to care for him. It was observed that Parfitt went periodically to Bristol, and that he returned with money, but how he gained it was his secret. He appears to have been a secretive and wicked old creature, with many strange tales of wild doings, some of which related to the West Coast of Africa, and possibly to the slave trade. Eventually his infirmity increased

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upon him. He could no longer get farther than his garden, and seldom left the great chair in which he was placed every day by the ministering Susanna Snook, just outside the porch of the cottage.

Then one summer morning, June 6th, 1768, an extraordinary thing happened. He had been deposited as usual, with a shawl round his shoulders, while the hard-working Susanna darted back to her own cottage near by. She was away for half an hour. When she returned she found, to her amazement, that the old seaman had disappeared. His sister was wringing her hands in great bewilderment over the shawl, which still remained upon the chair, but as to what became of the old reprobate nothing has ever been learned from that day to this. It should be emphasized that he was practically unable to walk and was far too heavy to be easily carried.

The alarm was at once given, and as the hay-making was in full swing the country-side was full of workers, who were ready to declare that even if he could have walked he could not have escaped their observation upon the roads. A search was started, but it was interrupted by a sudden and severe storm, with thunder and heavy rain. In spite of the weather, there was a general alarm for twenty-four hours, which failed to discover the least trace of the missing man. His unsavoury character, some reminiscences of the Obi men and Voodoo cult of Africa, and the sudden thunderstorm, all combined to assure the people of Somerset that the devil had laid his claws upon the old seaman; nor has any natural explanation since those days set the matter in a more normal light. There were hopes once that this had been attained when, in the year 1813, some human bones were discovered in the garden of a certain Widow Lockyer, who lived within two hundred yards of the old man's cottage. Susanna Snook was still alive, and gave evidence at the inquiry, but just as it began to appear that perhaps the old man had been coaxed away and murdered, a surgeon from Bristol shut down the whole matter by a positive declaration that the bones were those of a woman. So the affair rests till to-day.

No psychic explanation can be accepted in any case until all reasonable normal solutions have been exhausted. It is possible that those visits to Bristol were connected with blackmail, and that some deeper villain in the background found means to silence that dangerous tongue. But how was it done? It is a freakish, insoluble borderland case, and there we must leave it. The natural question arises: If you have spirit communications why are you unable to get an explanation? The answer is that spirit communication is also governed by inexorable laws, and that you might as well expect an electric current along a broken wire as to get a communication when the conditions have become impossible.

Passing on to a more definite example, let us take the case of the murder of Maria Marten, which was for a long time a favourite subject when treated at village fairs under the name of "The Mystery of the Red Barn." Maria Marten was murdered in the year 1827 by a young farmer named Corder, who should have married her but failed to do so, preferring to murder her in order to conceal the result of their illicit union. His ingenious method was to announce that he was about to marry the girl, and then at the last hour to entice her into an empty barn, where he shot her dead and buried her body. He then disappeared from the neighbourhood, and gave out that he and she were secretly wedded and were living together at some unknown address.

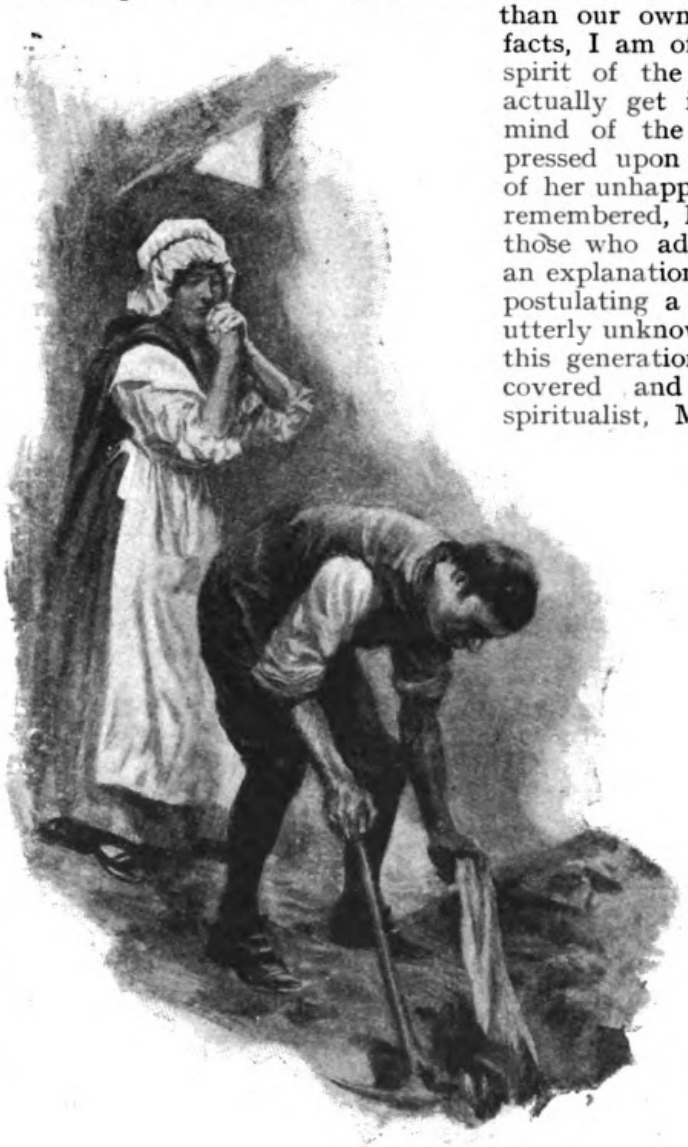
The murder was on May 18th, 1827, and for some time the plan was completely successful, the crime being more effectually concealed because Corder had left behind him instructions that the barn should be filled up with stock. The rascal sent home a few letters purporting to be from the Isle of Wight, explaining that Maria and he were living together in great contentment. Some suspicion was aroused by the fact that the postmarks of these letters were all from London, but none the less the matter might have been overlooked had it not been for the unusual action of an obscure natural law which had certainly never been allowed for in Mr. Corder's calculations.

Mrs. Marten, the girl's mother, dreamed upon three nights running that her daughter had been murdered. This in itself might count for little, since it may have only reflected her vague fears and distrust. The dreams, however, were absolutely definite. She saw in them the red barn, and even the very spot in which the remains had been deposited. The latter detail is of great importance, since it disposes of the idea that the incident could have arisen from the girl having told her mother that she had an assignation there. The dreams occurred in March, 1828, ten months after the crime, but it was the middle of April before the wife was able to persuade her husband to act upon such evidence. At last she broke down his very natural scruples, and permission was given to examine the barn, now cleared of its contents. The woman pointed to the spot and the man dug. A piece of shawl was immediately exposed, and eighteen inches below it the body itself was discovered, the horrified searcher staggering in a frenzy out of the ill-omened barn. The dress, the

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teeth, and some small details were enough to establish the identification.

The villain was arrested in London, where he had become, by marriage, the proprietor of a girls' school, and was engaged, at the moment of capture, in ticking off the minutes for the correct boiling of the breakfast eggs. He set up an ingenious defence, by which he tried to prove that the girl had committed suicide, but there was no doubt that it was a cold-blooded crime, for he had taken not only pistols but also a pickaxe into the barn. This was the view which the jury took, and he was duly hanged, confessing his guilt in a half-hearted way before his execution. It is an interesting fact that the London schoolmistress, whom he had trapped into marriage by means of a specious advertisement in which he described himself as a "private gentleman, whose disposition is not to be exceeded," remained devotedly attached to him to the end.



"A PIECE OF SHAWL WAS IMMEDIATELY EXPOSED, AND EIGHTEEN INCHES BELOW IT THE BODY ITSELF WAS DISCOVERED."

Now here is a case about which there is no possible doubt. The murder was unquestionably discovered by means of the triple dream, for which there could have been no natural explanation. There remain two psychic explanations. The one depends upon telepathy or thought-reading, a phenomenon which of course exists, as anyone can prove who experiments with it, but which has been stretched to most unreasonable lengths by those who would prefer any explanation to that which entails disembodied intelligence. It is, of course, within the bounds of remote possibility that the murderer thought of the girl's mother upon three successive nights and also upon the scene of the crime, thus connecting up the vision of one with the brain of the other. If any student thinks this the more probable explanation he is certainly entitled to accept it. On the other hand, there is a good deal of evidence that dreams, and especially early-in-the-morning dreams just before the final waking, do at times convey information which seems to come from other intelligences than our own. Taking all the facts, I am of opinion that the spirit of the dead woman did actually get in touch with the mind of the mother, and impressed upon her the true facts of her unhappy fate. It is to be remembered, however, that even those who advance telepathy as an explanation of such a case are postulating a power which was utterly unknown to science until this generation, which was discovered and named by the spiritualist, Mr. F. M. Myers, and which itself represents a great extension of our psychic knowledge. We must not allow it, however, to block our way to the further and more important advances which lie beyond it.

For purposes of comparison we will now take another dream case which is perfectly authentic. Upon February 8th, 1840, Edmund Norway, the Chief Officer of the ship *Orient*, at that time near St. Helena, dreamed a dream between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m. in which he saw his brother Nevell, a Cornish gentleman, murdered by two men. His brother was seen to be mounted. One of the assailants caught the horse's bridle and snapped a pistol twice, but no report was heard. He and his comrade then struck him several blows, and dragged him to the side of the road, where they left him. The road appeared to be a familiar one in Cornwall, but the house, which should have been on the right, came

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out upon the left in the visual picture. The dream was recorded in writing at the time, and was told to the other officers of the ship.

The murder had actually occurred, and the assassins, two brothers named Lightfoot, were executed on April 13th of that year at Bodmin. In his confession the elder brother said: "I went to Bodmin on February 8th and met my brother . . . my brother knocked Mr. Norway down. He snapped a pistol at him twice, but it did not go off. He then knocked him down with the pistol. It was on the road to Wadebridge." (The road which had been seen in the dream.) "We left the body in the water on the left side of the road coming to Wadebridge. My brother drew the body across the road to the watering." The evidence made it clear that the murder was committed between the hours of ten and eleven at night. As St. Helena is, roughly, in the same longitude as England, the time of the dream might exactly correspond with that of the crime.

These are the actual facts, and, though they may be explained, they cannot be explained away. It appears that Norway, the sailor, had been thinking of and writing to his landsman brother just before going to his bunk. This might possibly have made the subsequent vision more easy by bringing the two men into "rapport." There is a considerable body of evidence to prove that during sleep there is some part of us, call it the etheric body, the subconscious self, or what you will, which can detach itself and visit distant scenes, though the cut-off between sleeping and waking is so complete that it is very rarely that the memory of the night's experience is carried through. I could quote many examples within my own experience of this "travelling clairvoyance," as it is called, but one which attracted a good deal of attention at the time, as it was fully described in the *Times*, was that of Sir Rider Haggard's dog, the dead body of which was found through a vision of the night. The same occurs in the stupor of high fever, and I have heard my little son, with a temperature of one hundred and four degrees, make a remark in delirium which showed that he saw clearly what had occurred in the next room. "Naughty Denis, breaking my soldiers!" were the words, and they were absolutely correct. Thus it can easily be conceived that the consciousness of the sailor, drawn to his brother by recent loving thoughts, went swiftly to him in his sleep, and was so shocked to witness his murder that it was able to carry the record through into his normal memory. The case would resolve itself, then, into one which depended upon the normal but unexplored powers of the human organism, and not upon any interposition from the spirit of the murdered man. Had the vision of the latter appeared alone, without the accompanying scene, it would have seemed more probable that it was indeed a *post-mortem* apparition.

For the next illustration we will turn to the records of American crime. In this case, which is absolutely authentic, a man named Mortensen owed a considerable sum of money, three thousand eight hundred dollars, to a company, which was represented by the secretary, Mr. Hay. The transaction occurred in Utah in the year 1901. Mortensen beguiled Hay to his private house late in the evening, and nothing more was heard of the unfortunate man. Mortensen's story was that he paid the money in gold, and that Hay had given him a receipt and had started home with the money, carried in glass jars. When the police visited Mortensen's house in the morning they were accompanied by Hay's father-in-law, an aged Mormon named Sharp, who said: "Where did you last see my son-in-law?"

"Here," answered Mortensen, indicating a spot outside his door.

"If that is the last place you saw him," said Sharp, "then that is where you killed him."

"How do you know he is dead?" asked Mortensen.

"I have had a vision," said Sharp, "and the proof is that within twenty-four hours, and within one mile of the spot where you are standing, his dead body will be dug up from the field."

There was snow on the ground at the time, and next morning, December 18th, a neighbour observed some bloodstains upon it not very far from Mortensen's house. They led to a mound shaped like a grave. The neighbour procured a spade, borrowing it from Mortensen himself, and speedily unearthed the body of Hay. There was a bullet wound at the back of his head. His valuables had been untouched, but the receipt which he was known to have carried to Mortensen's house afforded sufficient reason for the murder.

The whole crime seems to have been a very crude and elementary affair, and it is difficult to see how Mortensen could have hoped to save himself, unless, indeed, an immediate flight was in his mind. There could be no adequate defence, and the man was convicted and shot—the law of Utah giving the criminal the choice as to the fashion of his own death. The only interest in the affair is the psychic one, for again old Sharp repeated at the trial that in a vision he had learned the facts. It is not a very clear case, however, and may conceivably have been a bluff upon the part of the old man,

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who had formed his own opinion as to the character of his son-in-law, and his probable actions. Such a solution would, however, involve a very extraordinary coincidence.

The next case which I would cite is very much more convincing—in fact, it is final in its clear proof of psychic action, though the exact degree may be open to discussion. The facts seem to have been established beyond all possible doubt, though there is some slight confusion about the date. According to the account of Mr. Williams, of Cornwall, the chief actor, it was in the early days of May, 1812, that he thrice in the same night had a remarkable dream. Mr. Williams was a man of affairs, and the superintendent of some great Cornish mines. He was familiar with the lobby of the House of Commons, into which his interests had occasionally led him. It was this lobby which he perceived clearly in his dream. His attention was arrested by a man in a snuff-coloured coat, with metal buttons, who loitered there. Presently there entered a small, brisk man in a blue coat and white waistcoat. As he passed the first man whipped out a pistol and shot the other through the breast. In his dream Mr. Williams was made aware that the murdered man was Mr. Perceval, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Williams was greatly impressed, and alarmed, by this dream, and he recounted it not only to his wife but also to several friends whom he met at the Godolphin mine next day, asking their advice whether he should go up to London and report the matter. To this they answered very naturally, but unfortunately as the event proved, that it was useless, and would only expose him to derision. On the thirteenth, about ten days after the dream, Mr. Williams narrates how his son, returning from Truro, rushed into the room crying, "Oh, father, your dream has come true! Mr. Perceval has been shot in the House of Commons." The deed, as is well known, was committed by a man named Bellingham, who had some imaginary grievance. The dress of the two chief actors, and all the other details, proved to be exactly as foretold.

In an account in the *Times* sixteen years later it was stated that the vision was upon the actual night of the murder, which would reduce the case to ordinary clairvoyance, but the evidence is very strong that it was prophetic as well. Mr. Williams, writing in 1832, four years after the *Times* account, repeated the story once more as it is set forth here. His wife, his friends at the mine, his projected journey to London, and his recollection of his son's arrival with the news all corroborate his version of the affair. What comment can we make upon such an incident? Explain it we cannot, but at least we can get some light upon it by examining the statements of others who have had both the clairvoyant and the prophetic faculty. One of these was Swedenborg, who exhibited it again and again, but we have no exact account from him as to how his visions came. More to the point are the notes of Mr. Turvey, of Bournemouth, a most remarkable psychic, whose "Beginnings of Seership" is one of the most illuminating books I know. Our ordinary comments must always be explanations from outside, but this gentleman, with his great powers and analytical brain, is able to give us more precious information which comes from within. Mr. Turvey was not only an extraordinary



"ONE OF THE ASSAILANTS CAUGHT THE HORSE'S BRIDLE AND SNAPPED A PISTOL TWICE, BUT NO REPORT WAS HEARD. HE AND HIS COMRADE THEN STRUCK HIM SEVERAL BLOWS."

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clairvoyant, capable of throwing out his own etheric body at will, and communicating at once to others the information which it brought back, but he again and again saw scenes of the future which he put upon record and which frequently, if not invariably, were fulfilled. His description of his own sensation is very helpful and destined, I think, to be classical. He says: "At certain times I see a sort of ribbon moving like the endless belt of a cinema film. In colour it is very pale heliotrope, and seems to vibrate very rapidly. On it are numerous little pictures, some of which appear to be engraved upon the film itself, while others are like pale blue photographs stuck upon the film. The former refer to past, the latter to future events. The locality is judged by the scenery and climatic heat" (felt by the observer). "The dates are judged by the clearness of the pictures."

Now, applying this analysis of Mr. Turvey to the far less complete experience of Mr. Williams, we get some glimmer of light. Mr. Williams was of Welsh or Cornish stock, and predisposed to the psychic. In his busy life he could not develop it as Mr. Turvey had done, for the latter, though he was once a famous athlete, had broken in health to an extent which confined him to his chair. Yet at times his true innate powers could assert themselves, and thus he received or perceived one of those cinema visions of which Mr. Turvey speaks. Why it should have been sent him is beyond our ken. Was it to prompt him to go to London, as he so nearly did, and try to turn the stream of fate? Or was it as impersonal as were many of the prophetic visions of Mr. Turvey? One cannot say, but there is a big fact standing up as clear as the Nelson Column, and to turn away one's eyes, pretend not to see it, and make no attempt to fit it into the general scheme of the universe is neither science nor common sense. Mr. Turvey has left it upon record that he saw more unpleasant than pleasant things, and Mr. Williams's experience was in accordance. This might be taken as supporting the idea that the visions are for the purpose of warning and prevention. When one considers that in this instance the picture of the lobby of the House of Commons was presented to one of the very few men in Cornwall who would recognize the place when they saw it, it certainly suggests that the vision did not merely happen, but came for a definite purpose. It is not to be denied that this and many other prophetic cases strengthen the argument of the fatalist, who holds that our Life's path is marked out for us. On the other hand, the student will find a certain number of cases which give a comforting assurance that, though the general path may be indicated, there is still a certain play of events which gives room for changes in the issue. I have notes, for example, of one dream or vision in which the subject had a most clear impression of a long series of events, which ended in his going down a coal-mine, the latter experience being particularly vivid. Some months afterwards the whole long episode occurred exactly as depicted, but when they came to the coal-mine the guide said: "I had hoped to take you down the coal-mine, but it is a holiday, and the cage is not working." In another case a young officer of my acquaintance was warned by a dead comrade that they would meet again upon a certain date. The young man spent the day in his dug-out, and late in the evening was congratulating himself upon having got through, when about 10 p.m. his Company Commander came round and said: "I fear I must ask you to do a rather dirty job. We have to find if there are any of our dead near the German wire. Take a few men and make an examination." He gave himself up as lost, and his batman, who had heard the story, burst into tears. The young fellow was so convinced of his own impending fate that he left his party safe in No Man's Land, thinking that there was no use in their being sacrificed also. He went forward alone, made a perfectly successful search, returned in safety, and had no misfortune at all. Such a case must hearten up those who are overburdened by any prophecy or presentiment. It may be that some force—prayer, perhaps—can divert the stream of fate.

We shall now turn to some cases which were more clearly ultramundane in their nature, and I would express my obligation to Mr. Harold Furniss, whose care has restored many details in his collection of criminal records. The first which I would choose is the murder of Sergeant Davies in the Highlands in the year 1749. Davies was part of the English garrison left in the north after the suppression of Prince Charlie's rising, and, like many of his comrades, he alleviated his exile by the excellent sport which the barren country afforded. Upon September 28th in that year he went shooting near Braemar without any attendant. The rancour of the recent war had to some extent died down, and in any case the sergeant, who was a powerful and determined man, feared no opponent. The result showed, however, that he was overbold, as he never returned from his expedition. Search parties were sent out, but months passed and there were still no signs of the missing soldier. Five years passed, and the mystery was still unsolved. At the end of that time, two Highlanders, Duncan Terig and Alex. Bain Macdonald, were arrested

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because the fowling-piece and some of the property of the lost man were found in their possession. The case rested mainly, however, upon some evidence which was as strange as any ever heard in a court of law.

A farm labourer named Alex. Macpherson, aged twenty-six, deposed that one night in the summer of 1750 — that is, some nine months after the sergeant's disappearance — he was lying awake in the barn where all the servants slept, when he saw enter a man dressed in blue, who came to his bedside and beckoned him to follow. Outside the door the figure turned and said: "I am Sergeant Davies." The apparition then pointed to a distant moss or swamp, and said: "You will find my bones there. Go and bury them at once, for I can have no peace, nor will I give you any, until my bones are buried, and you may get Donald Farquharson to help you." It then vanished.



"HE WAS LYING AWAKE IN THE BARN, WHEN HE SAW ENTER A MAN DRESSED IN BLUE WHO BECKONED HIM TO FOLLOW."

Early next day Macpherson, according to his own account, went to the place indicated and, obeying the exact instructions received, he came straight upon the body, still wearing the blue regimental coat of Guise's Horse. Macpherson laid it upon the surface, dragging it out from the slime, but did not bury it. A few nights later the vision appeared to him once more as he lay in the barn, and reproached him with having failed to carry out the instructions given. Macpherson asked: "Who murdered you?" To this the apparition answered: "Duncan Terig and Alex. Macdonald," and vanished once more. Macpherson next day went to Farquharson and asked him to come and help bury the body, to which the latter agreed. It was accordingly done. No one else was told of the incident save only one friend, John Grewar, who was informed within two days of the burial.

This story was certainly open to criticism, as the arrest was in 1754, and the alleged apparition and subsequent burial in 1750, so that one would naturally ask why no information had been given during four years. On the other hand, one could imagine that these Celtic Highlanders were somewhat in the position of Irish peasants in an agrarian outrage. They were bound together against a common enemy, and would not act save under pressure. This pressure arrived when the two suspects were actually arrested, the murdered man's gear was found upon them, and direct inquiry was made from the folk in the neighbourhood. No ill-will was shown to exist between Macpherson and the accused men, nor was any motive alleged for so extraordinary a concoction. On the psychic side there are also some objections. One would have conceived that the sergeant might return, as others seem to have done, in order to identify his murderers, but in this case that was a secondary result, and the main one appears to have been the burial of his own remains. Spirits are not much concerned about their own bodies. In a communication which I saw recently, the deceased alluded to his body as "that thing that I used to go about in." Still, earthly prejudices die hard, and if Davies, sprung from a decent stock, yearned for a decent burial, it would surely not be an unnatural thing.

There was some corroboration for Macpherson's weird story. There were female quarters in this barn, and a woman worker, named Isabel Machardie, deposed that on

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the second occasion of the apparition she saw "something naked come in at the door and go straight to Macpherson's bed, which frighted her so much that she drew the clothes over her head." She added that when it appeared it came in a bowing posture, but she could not tell what it was. The next morning she asked Macpherson what it was that had troubled them the night before, and he answered that she might be easy, for it would trouble them no more.

There is a discrepancy here between the blue-coated figure of the first vision and the "something naked" of the second, but the fact remained that the woman claimed to have seen something alarming, and to have alluded to it next day. Macpherson, however, could speak nothing but Gaelic, his evidence being interpreted to the Court. Lockhart, the defending barrister, naturally asked in what tongue the vision spoke, to which Macpherson answered: "In as good Gaelic as ever I heard in Lochaber." "Pretty good for the ghost of an English sergeant," said Lockhart, and this facile retort made the Court laugh, and finally brought about the acquittal of the prisoners, in spite of the more material proofs which could not be explained away. Later, both Lockhart and the advocate engaged with him admitted their belief in the guilt of their clients.

As a matter of fact, Davies had fought at Culloden in April, 1746, and met his end in September, 1749, so that he had been nearly three and a half years in the Highlands, mixing in sport with the gillies, and it is difficult to suppose that he could not muster a few simple sentences of their language. But apart from that, although our information shows that knowledge has to be acquired by personal effort, and not by miracle in the after life, still it is to be so acquired, and if Sergeant Davies saw that it was only in a Gael that he would find those rare psychic gifts which would enable him to appear and to communicate (for every spirit manifestation must have a material basis), then it is not inconceivable that he would master the means, during the ten months or so which elapsed before his reappearance. Presuming that Macpherson's story is true, it by no means follows that he was the medium, since any one of the sleepers in the barn might have furnished that nameless atmosphere which provides the correct conditions. In all such cases it is to be remembered that this atmosphere is rare, and that a spirit comes back not as it would or when it would, but as it can. Law, inexorable law, still governs every fresh annexe which we add to our knowledge, and only by defining and recognizing its limitations will we gain some dim perception of the conditions of the further life and its relation to the present one.

We now pass to a case where the spirit interposition seems to have been as clearly proved as anything could be. It was, it is true, some time ago, but full records are still available. In the year 1632 a yeoman named John Walker lived at the village of Great Lumley, some miles north of Durham. A cousin named Anne Walker kept house for him, and intimacy ensued, with the prospect of the usual results. John Walker greatly feared the scandal, and took diabolical steps to prevent it. He sent the young woman over to the town of Chester-le-Street to the care of one Dame Carr. To this matron Anne Walker confessed everything, adding that Walker had used the ominous phrase "that he would take care both of her and of her child." One night at Dame Carr's door there appeared the sinister visage of Mark Sharp, a Blackburn collier, with a specious message which induced the girl to go with him into the dusk. She was never seen again. Walker, upon being appealed to by Dame Carr, said that it was all right, and that it was better in her condition that she should be among strangers. The old lady had her suspicions, but nothing could be done, and the days passed on.

A fortnight later a miller, named James Graham, was grinding corn in his mill at night some miles away. It was after midnight when he descended to the floor of the mill after putting a fresh fill of corn in the hopper. His exact experience, as preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, was as follows:—

"The mill door being shut, there stood a woman in the midst of the floor, with her hair hanging down and all bloody, with five large wounds on her head. He being much amazed began to bless himself, and at last asked her who she was and what she wanted. She answered, 'I am the spirit of Anne Walker, who lived with John Walker. . . . He promised to send me to where I should be well looked to . . . and then I should come again and keep his house. I was one night sent away with Mark Sharp, who, upon a certain moor' (naming the place) 'slew me with a pick such as men dig coal with, and gave me these five wounds, and after threw my body into a coal-pit hard by, and hid the pick under a bank, and his shoes and stockings being bloody he endeavoured to wash them, but seeing the blood would not part he hid them there.'" The spirit ended by ordering the miller to reveal the truth on pain of being haunted.

In this case, as in the last, the message was not delivered. The horrified miller was so impressed that he would by no means be alone, but he shirked the delicate task

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which had been confided to him. In spite of all his precautions, however, he found himself alone one evening, with the result that the vision instantly reappeared, " very fierce and cruel," to use his description, and insisted that he should do as commanded. More obdurate than the Celtic Macpherson, the miller awaited a third summons, which came in so terrific a form in his own garden that his resistance was completely broken down, and so, four days before Christmas, he went to the nearest magistrate and lodged his deposition. Search was at once made, and the vision was justified in all particulars, which, it must be admitted, has not always been the case where information has seemed to come from beyond. The girl's body, the five wounds in the head, the pick, the bloodstained shoes and stockings were all found, and as the body was in a deep coal-pit there seemed no normal means by which the miller could possibly have known the nature of the wounds unless he had himself inflicted them, which is hardly consistent either with the known facts, with his appearance as informer, or with the girl's admissions to Dame Carr.

John Walker and Mark Sharp were both arrested and were tried for murder at the Durham Assizes before Judge Davenport. It was shown that the miller was unknown, save by sight, to either prisoner, so that it could not be suggested that he had any personal reason for swearing away their lives by a concocted tale. The trial was an extraordinary one, for there seems to have been a psychic atmosphere such as has never been recorded in a prosaic British court of law. The foreman of the jury, a Mr. Fairbairn, declared in an affidavit that he saw during the trial the " likeness of a child standing upon Walker's shoulder." This might be discounted as being the effect upon an emotional nature of the weird evidence to which he listened, but it received a singular corroboration from the judge, who wrote afterwards to a fellow-lawyer, Mr. Serjeant Hutton, of Goldsborough, that he himself was aware of a figure such as Fairbairn described, and that during the whole proceedings he was aware of a most uncanny and unusual sensation for which he could by no means account. The verdict was guilty, and the two men were duly executed.

The array of responsible witnesses in this case was remarkable. There was the judge himself, Mr. Fairbairn with his affidavit, Mr. James Smart, Mr. William Lumley, of Great Lumley, and others. The deposition of the miller, James Graham, is preserved in the Bodleian Library. Altogether, it is difficult to see how any case could be better authenticated, and I have no doubt myself that the facts were as stated, and that this single case is enough to convince an unprejudiced mind of the continuance of individuality and of the penetrability of that screen which separates us from the dead.

What comment can psychic science make upon such an episode? In the first place, I would judge that the miller was a powerful medium—that is, he exuded that rare atmosphere which enables a spirit to become visible as the meteorite becomes visible when it passes through the atmosphere of earth. It is, I repeat, a rare quality, and in this case seems to have been unknown to its possessor, though I should expect to find that the miller had many other psychic experiences which took a less public form. This is the reason why the apparition did not appear before the magistrate himself, but could only approach him by messenger. The spirit may have searched some time before she found her medium, just as Sergeant Davies was ten months before he found the Highlander who had those physical qualities which enabled him to communicate. Law and obedience to law run through the whole subject. It is also abundantly evident that the confiding woman who had been treated with such cold-blooded ingratitude and treachery carried over to the other world her natural feelings of indignation and her desire for justice. As a curious detail it is also evident that she recovered her consciousness instantly after death, and was enabled to observe the movements of her assassin. With what organs, one may ask? With what organs do we see clear details in a dream? There is something there besides our material eyes.

A most reasonable objection may be urged as to why many innocent people have suffered death and yet have experienced no super-normal help which might have saved them. Any criminologist could name off-hand a dozen cases where innocent men have gone to the scaffold. Why were they not saved? I have written in vain if I have not by now enabled the reader to answer the question himself. If the physical means are not there, then it is impossible. It may seem unjust, but not more so than the fact that a ship provided with wireless may save its passengers while another is heard of no more. The problem of unmerited suffering is part of that larger problem of the functions of pain and evil, which can only be explained on the supposition that spiritual chastening and elevation come in this fashion, and that this end is so important that the means are trivial in comparison. We must accept this provisional explanation, or we are faced with chaos.

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Can these dim forces which we see looming above and around us be turned to the use of man? It would be a degradation to use them for purely material ends, and it would, in my opinion, bring some retribution with it; but where the interests of Justice are concerned, I am convinced that they could indeed be used to good effect. Here is a case in point.

Two brothers, Eugene and Paul Dupont, lived some fifty years ago in the Rue St. Honoré of Paris. Eugene was a banker, Paul a man of letters. Eugene disappeared. Every conceivable effort was made to trace him, but the police finally gave it up as hopeless. Paul was persevering, however, and in company with a friend, Laporte, he visited Mme. Huerta, a well-known clairvoyante, and asked for her assistance.

We have no record as to how far articles of the missing man were given to the medium, as a bloodhound is started on a trail, but whether it was by psychometry or not, Mme. Huerta, in the mesmerized state, very quickly got in touch with the past of the two brothers, from the dinner where they had last met. She described Eugene, and followed his movements from the hour that he left the restaurant until he vanished into a house which was identified without difficulty by her audience, though she was unable to give the name of the street. She then described how inside the house Eugene Dupont had held a conference with two men, whom she described, how he had signed some paper, and had received a bundle of bank-notes. She then saw him leave the house, she saw the two men follow him, she saw two other men join in the pursuit, and finally she saw the four assault the banker, murder him, and throw the body into the Seine.

Paul was convinced by the narrative, but his comrade, Laporte, regarded it as a fabrication. They had no sooner reached home, however, than they learned that the missing man had been picked out of the river and was exposed at the Morgue. The police, however, were inclined to take the view of suicide, as a good deal of money was in the pockets. Paul Dupont knew better, however. He hunted out the house, he discovered that the occupants did business with his brother's firm, he found that they held a receipt for two thousand pounds in exchange for notes paid to his brother on the night of the crime, and yet those notes were missing. A letter making an appointment was also discovered.

The two men, a father and son, named Dubuchet, were then arrested, and the missing links were at once discovered. The pocket-book which Eugene Dupont had in his possession on the night of the murder was found in Dubuchet's bureau. Other evidence was forthcoming, and finally the two villains were found guilty and were condemned to penal servitude for life. The medium was not summoned as a witness, on the ground that she was not conscious at the time of her vision, but her revelations undoubtedly brought about the discovery of the crime.

Now it is clear in this authentic case that the police would have saved themselves much trouble, and come to a swifter conclusion, had they themselves consulted Mme. Huerta in the first instance. And if it is obviously true in this case, why might it not be so in many other cases? It should be possible at every great police centre to have the call upon the best clairvoyant or other medium that can be got, and to use them freely for what they are worth. None are infallible. They have their off-days and their failures. No man should ever be convicted upon their evidence. But when it comes to suggesting clues and links, then it might be invaluable. In the case of Mr. Foxwell, the London stockbroker who fell into the Thames some years ago, it is well known that the mode of his death, and the place where his body would be found, were described by Von Bourg, the crystal-gazer, and that it was even as he had said. I venture to say that the mere knowledge that the police had an ally against whom every cunning precaution might prove unavailing would in itself be a strong deterrent to premeditated crime. This is so obvious, that if it had not been for vague scientific and religious prejudices, it would surely have been done long ago. Its adoption may be one of the first practical and material benefits given by psychic science to humanity.

[In the next article Sir A. Conan Doyle will treat the profoundly interesting subject of Spiritism from yet another point of view.]

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DOUBLE EVENT

BY

W. PETT RIDGE

Illustrated by A. Leete



"ALL I WANTED TO TELL YOU, SIR, IS THAT I'M AT LAST FAIRLY ON THE TRACK OF THE COMPANION TO THAT VASE UP THERE."

"I THINK, sir," announced Barker, carefully — "I can't be absolutely certain, but I go so far as to venture to say—I rather imagine that, after taking considerable trouble and also a certain amount of pains——"

"Life is brief," said Mr. Merrilees, glancing up from his writing-desk. "Try to finish your sentence, Barker, ere we are both taken from this world."

"All I wanted to tell you, sir, is that I'm at last fairly on the track of the companion to that vase up there on the top of the bookcase."

"Did I—forgive me for inquiring—omit to lock up the liqueur-stand?"

Barker offered a gesture of protest against the implied criticism on his habits, and stared fixedly at the vase. There had been a time when, newly purchased in King Street, St. James's, it owned a more conspicuous seat amongst the treasures of the room. The comment of friends, allowed to inspect—"But what a tragedy that you haven't the pair!"—this, on the hundredth repetition, caused Mr. Merrilees to transfer it, with his own hands, to a comparatively obscure position.

"The manner," said Barker, formally, "in which the discovery occurred is somewhat interesting."

"Look here," interrupted his master, swinging around on the revolving chair. "You are, either for the pleasure of hearing your own voice or from some insane notion of entertaining me, about to give some preposterous yarn of catching sight in the window of a second-hand——"

"The companion vase, sir, is in the possession of Mrs. Grant. Mrs. Grant, of Albion Street, Hyde Park."

"My cousin," exclaimed Mr. Merrilees, jumping up.

"Second cousin, sir, I believe."

"Barker," said his master, walking to and fro rapidly, "be very particular now how you answer my questions. This vase is one of a pair that formerly belonged to an uncle of mine. A great man, a notable lawyer, a prominent statesman. I bought the vase when I saw it offered for sale because I wished to have a souvenir of my distinguished relative. Thinking it likely that the other was held by Mrs. Grant, I went to her. I took a taxi, and went to

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her. She denied any knowledge of it. And now you come and tell me it is in her house. Consequently, I have to face the certainty that either you or she is telling the truth. But not both."

"Far be it from me," said Barker, doggedly, "to hint at anything against a lady, but facts, sir, look at 'em how you will, are facts, and there's no getting away from 'em."

Invited to speak freely, Barker admitted that chance had been his most prominent helper. Chance took him to Green Park to hear the band on Sunday evening. Chance induced him to take the extravagant step of disbursing twopence-halfpenny to go into the enclosure. Chance found him with a cigar but no match, and chance, assuredly, was responsible for the circumstance that a young woman seated near—and hereinafter referred to as Miss D.—was able, on noting his predicament, to offer a box of Swan vestas, and (after conversation regarding London's open spaces, music of brass as compared with string, price of boots) to urge he would borrow it, and hand it back on any occasion when he chanced to be near Albion Street. Barker, it appeared, called there on the Monday Miss D.'s mistress was out, and Miss D. obtained a permit from cook to show her friend the drawing-room and its contents. Barker, catching sight of the vase, said, "And where did she pick that up, I wonder?" Miss D. replied, "Oh, that was left to her by a relative. Everybody mentions what a shame it is she hasn't got the pair!" Barker said nothing further, but, after thinking the matter over, decided to speak to his master.

"I am opposed to burglary," said Mr. Merrilees, now thoroughly interested, "and I have conscientious objections to housebreaking, but I feel I have no right to impose my views, without discrimination, on other people. This Miss D. of yours, Barker. Is she a broad-minded young woman, untrammelled by ideas that hamper some of us concerning property? What I mean is, would she, for a consideration, smuggle the vase out of the house one evening, in a fish-mat, or game-basket, or something of the kind?"

"I fancy not, sir."

"You don't appear to be sure."

'Miss D., sir," explained Barker, "turned out to be a Christadelphian. On ascertaining that I had served in Palestine, she broke off the engagement."

"You met her, for the first time, last Sunday, and the engagement is already at an end?"

"That's her view, sir."

"Barker," said Mr. Merrilees, speaking with earnestness, "I envy you the celerity with which you manage your affairs of the heart. In my own case, I have always, I fear, erred on the side of deliberation."

"So I've understood, sir."

"Who told you?" demanded the other, irritatedly. "Who has been carrying tittle-tattle to and fro? Why do you listen to these rumours?" Barker apologized. His master regained composure, and went back to the subject. "I have heard of nothing so rapid," he mentioned, "since the experiences of Mr. Solomon Grundy. And I cannot help wishing you had kept the matter in suspense until this question of the vase had been settled. You couldn't, I suppose, take up the threads afresh and——"

"Pardon me, sir," said Barker, with respect, "but Miss D. was definite."

"A woman's nay doth stand for naught."

"Not in our rank of society, sir."

Barker's master thought for a few moments. "Put out my oldest suit," he ordered.

Mr. Merrilees, when he set out, wore, for head-gear, a tweed cap, pulled well over the eyes; he carried a bag, left in the flat by a workman who had seemingly not cultivated the memory to a full extent. Mr. Merrilees took omnibus so far as Marble Arch, and thence walked westwards, practising the leisurely gait of one paid by the hour. At the house in Albion Street, on the front door being opened, he said he had called to put the telephone right; always a safe and a plausible excuse. The young woman (obviously Miss D.) said that mistress would be very glad, and, conducting him to a room off the hall, prepared to wait until the job was completed.

"The fault," announced Mr. Merrilees, assuming a hoarse voice, "is, to my mind, in the droring-room."

"In that case, we will make our way there."

"No need to trouble you, miss."

"I know my duty, thank you."

Mr. Merrilees, at the moment of entering the drawing-room, saw the vase. He found his resolution increased; the necessity for promptitude became clear.

"How long is the old lady going to be?"

"My mistress," answered the young woman, precisely, "is by no means old, and, as to the length of her absence from the household, that I cannot say. An hour, maybe. Perhaps longer."

"Then I'd better begin stripping off the wall-paper right away."

"You dare!" she challenged, alarmedly. She added a threat to summon cook and to send for the road-sweeper. Mr. Merrilees, replying to a suggestion, said it was impossible for him to call later; he would, however, agree to take a seat and wait for Mrs. Grant. The young woman mentioned

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that it was customary for gentlemen to take their caps off on finding themselves indoors.

Despite hints, she refused to leave Mr. Merrilees, and he talked to her on casual subjects, hoping to exhaust patience; a chance word gave an opening for the young woman to mention that she was about to marry. The name of the fortunate individual was on the edge of being disclosed when the turning of a latch-key was heard at the front door below, and she vanished. Mr. Merrilees had now some adventurous notion of seizing the vase, and, with it, making his escape. Mrs. Grant was, he



"'STUART!' CRIED HER VOICE AT THE DOORWAY. SHE CAME FORWARD, HOLDING OUT HER HAND."

believed, still a dressy person, and nothing seemed more likely than that she would go direct to her room and change, thus leaving the way clear.

"Stuart!" cried her voice at the doorway.

"Jessie!" he said, involuntarily.

She came forward, holding out her hand; Mr. Merrilees fumbled at his cap, but Mrs. Grant insisted on the exchange of a greeting.

"And have you really," she asked, with emotion, "come down to this? Why didn't someone tell me? I had an idea you were quite well off."

"These are topsy-turvy days."

"But it's splendid of you to face the situation in this way. How much do you earn a week, Stuart?"

"If I told you, you'd laugh."

Mrs. Grant, acutely pained by this suggestion, sat down, and pulling a chair in her direction, requested him to take it. He was asked to give all the particulars of his change of fortune, and this would have made serious demands on his powers of romancing, but that he, by an inspiration, found an excuse.

"I shall get myself into trouble," he urged, "if I'm too long over this repairing job."

"I know, I know!" she remarked, sympathetically. "But do tell me just this. You had, I presume, to sell everything. What happened to the vase you once bought, for a sum greater than I could afford, at Christie's? I specially want to know."

"That," he admitted, "I saved from the general wreck."

She patted his hand soothingly. "What will you take for it, Stuart?"

"It is not for sale, Jessie, to you."

"Does that," she cried, joyously, "does that mean you will make me a present of it?" In an impetuous way, she leaned forward and kissed him, thus arresting the contradiction he was about to give; it seemed to him elementary rules of behaviour required that he should, in acknowledgment, kiss her.

"Do you recollect?" she whispered.

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"I am not likely to forget," he answered.

"The last time."

"The previous time," he corrected.

"It doesn't seem a great while since."

"Appears but yesterday," agreed Mr. Merrilees.

"Near Arthur's Seat, just outside Edinburgh."

"I was nervous," he said, "lest you should be offended."

"I was disappointed," she remarked, "because you kissed me only once. You were but a lad then, Stuart."

"You are little more than a girl now, Jessie."

"Dear man!" she said, contentedly. "Where, and when, shall I send for the vase? Are you living in one of those queer model dwellings?"

"My residence," said Mr. Merrilees, "has no just claim to that description. I will send the vase along."

"By hand," she recommended. "Don't trust the parcels delivery companies."

"It shall come by someone whom I can trust."

Below, the telephone bell rang, and the maid could be heard answering the call. Mrs. Grant went to the landing to see if her presence was required; the young woman called up that the message was for herself, and that the instrument appeared to be all in order again.

"How clever of you," said the mistress of the house, turning to Mr. Merrilees. "Some workmen would have taken ages."

"The great thing," he said, modestly, "is to find out what is wrong, and then to put it right."

"Something is wrong with my life, Stuart. I had an idea it was the vase, but now that, thanks to your generosity, I am to have the pair, I can see there is still——"

"We must meet again."

"I suppose Sunday is your only free day?"

"I get my Saturday afternoons," he remarked.

"Are these"—she touched his waistcoat—"forgive me for asking—are these your only clothes?"

"I have others."

"In that case, come here to lunch so soon as you can spare the time."

"Delighted. One o'clock?"

"One-thirty."

"Good," said Mr. Merrilees, promptly; "I'll make a note of it directly I get back to Jermyn Street."

"Jermyn Street West?"

"That," he remarked, with haste, "is where my next job is."

"Telephone to me, now and again, when you are engaged on one of these tasks. It will be a real pleasure, Stuart, to hear your voice."

The honest workman was shown out of the house by the maid. It might have been as a result of confused thoughts that he imagined the young woman, in doing so, permitted her right eye-lid to deflect slightly.

At the flat, Barker was summoned, and appeared, after an interval, in a tweed suit. There was a suspicion of independence in his manner.

"Barker, you know the vase?"

"I do."

"Have it packed securely. In a way that no damage can come to it."

"Very well."

"Which way are you going, Barker?"

"Had an idea, a vague sort of a plan, a sort of a dim notion, to take a bit of a promenade along Bayswater Road way."

"In that case, be so good as to take the vase to an address which I will write on a sheet of note-paper."

It gratified Mr. Merrilees, in glancing out of the window, to note that within the space of one minute and a half, Barker was out carrying the package, and making his way briskly. "A treasure," said Mr. Merrilees, referring to his man. "I shouldn't know what to do if I were to lose him." He went to the telephone book, and found Mrs. Grant's number.

"Merrilees speaking. Oh, is that you, Jessie? Forgive me for ringing you up so quickly, but I wanted to say the vase is on its way. What is that? You have changed your mind? You want me now to accept the one you possess? Oh, well now, that's extremely good of you, but—— You're quite sure? Well, if you really mean it, will you give yours to my messenger, and tell him to bring both back in a taxi? And I say, Jessie. There's a good deal I have to explain. If you don't mind, I'll come to lunch to-morrow. Bless you!"

An hour later, he rang again.

"Bothering you again, dear, but my messenger has not yet returned. Can you—— What's that? Speak slowly, please. Your maid has gone, leaving a note to say that she is marrying Barker, and they have taken the two vases as a wedding present? Well, of all the pieces of infernal cheek——!"

They have not yet decided whether to live in Jermyn Street or in Albion Street. This arranged, the engagement of Mr. Merrilees and Mrs. Grant will be announced in the public journals.

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The Hardest Bridge Problems.

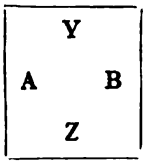
SIX MORE EXAMPLES.

The series of problems published last winter under the title of "The Hardest Bridge Problems" proved so popular with our readers that we now give another series, selected by Mr. R. F. Foster as examples of the varying styles of six different composers, which we feel sure will be found equally entertaining. Solutions next month.

1.—By R. C. Mankowski.

Hearts—6.
Clubs—Knave, 10, 7, 5, 4.
Diamonds—None.
Spades—None.

Hearts—8, 7.
Clubs—None.
Diamonds—None.
Spades—Knave, 10, 6, 4.



Hearts—None.
Clubs—8, 6, 3.
Diamonds—Knave, 6.
Spades—7.

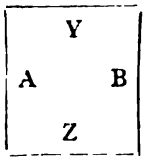
Hearts—10.
Clubs—None.
Diamonds—8, 3.
Spades—Queen, 8, 5.

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win four.

2.—By Alex. Porges.

Hearts—King, 3.
Clubs—5, 4, 3.
Diamonds—None.
Spades—8, 2.

Hearts—Knave.
Clubs—7, 6.
Diamonds—10.
Spades—King, 7, 4.



Hearts—9.
Clubs—Knave, 8.
Diamonds—King, 8, 5.
Spades—6.

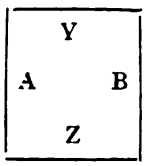
Hearts—None.
Clubs—King, 10.
Diamonds—Queen, 6, 3.
Spades—Ace, 5.

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win six.

3.—By T. J. Wertenbaker.

Hearts—4.
Clubs—Ace, 5, 3, 2.
Diamonds—King, 5, 4.
Spades—None.

Hearts—None.
Clubs—Queen, knave, 7, 6, 4.
Diamonds—3.
Spades—8, 4.



Hearts—None.
Clubs—9, 8.
Diamonds—Knave, 10, 9.
Spades—King, 10, 5.

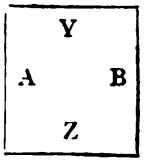
Hearts—2.
Clubs—10.
Diamonds—Queen, 8, 6.
Spades—9, 3, 2.

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win six.

4.—By R. C. Lasher.

Hearts—9, 4, 2.
Clubs—Ace, 4.
Diamonds—None.
Spades—King, 5.

Hearts—7, 5.
Clubs—King.
Diamonds—Ace, 9.
Spades—Knave, 10.



Hearts—6.
Clubs—Queen, knave.
Diamonds—King, 6.
Spades—Queen, 6.

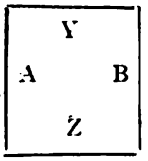
Hearts—8.
Clubs—8, 7.
Diamonds—Queen, 10, 3.
Spades—Ace.

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win all seven.

5.—By H. Boardman.

Hearts—8.
Clubs—Queen, 3, 2.
Diamonds—Ace, 9, 7, 6.
Spades—None.

Hearts—7.
Clubs—King, 7, 5.
Diamonds—King, 10, 2.
Spades—5.



Hearts—3.
Clubs—Knave, 4.
Diamonds—Knave, 8, 5.
Spades—9, 8.

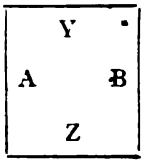
Hearts—9, 4.
Clubs—8, 6.
Diamonds—Queen, 4, 3.
Spades—6.

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win five.

6.—By S. C. Kinsey.

Hearts—Knave, 9, 3.
Clubs—3, 2.
Diamonds—None.
Spades—King, 10.

Hearts—Ace, 4.
Clubs—King, 10, 6.
Diamonds—8, 6.
Spades—None.



Hearts—10, 7, 5.
Clubs—Knave.
Diamonds—None.
Spades—9, 8, 5.

Hearts—King, queen, 8.
Clubs—Ace, queen.
Diamonds—King.
Spades—Knave.

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win six.

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THE FLOWER OF SPAIN

By JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

Illustrated by W·R·S STOTT·R·I

A COMPLETE NOVEL

by the Author of "The Three Black Pennys," one of the most striking works of fiction which have appeared for many years.

This story will be included in "The Happy End," shortly to be published by Heinemann.

I.

FROM the window of the drawing-room Lavinia Sanviano could see, on the left, the Statue of Garibaldi, where the Corso Regina Maria cut into the Lungarno; on the right, and farther along, the grey-green foliage of the Cascine. Before her the Arno flowed away, sluggish and without a wrinkle or reflection on its turbid surface, into Tuscany. It was past the middle of the afternoon, and a steady procession of carriages and mounted officers in pale blue tunics moved below toward the shade of the Cascine.

Lavinia could not see this gay progress very well, for the window—it had only a narrow ledge guarded by an iron grille—was practically filled by her sister, Gheta, and Anna Mantegazza. Occasionally she leaned forward, pressed upon Gheta's shoulder, for a hasty unsatisfactory glimpse.

"You are crushing my sleeves!" Gheta finally and sharply complained. "Do go somewhere else. Anna and I want to talk without your young ears eternally about. When do you return to the convent?"

Lavinia drew back. However, she didn't leave. She was accustomed to her sister's complaining, and—unless the other went to their father—she ignored her hints. Lavinia's curiosity in worldly scenes and topics was almost as full as her imagination thereof. She was sixteen, and would have to endure another year of obscurity before her marriage could be thought of, or she take any part in the social life where Gheta moved with such marked success.

But, Lavinia realized with a sigh, she couldn't expect to be pursued like Gheta, who was very beautiful. Gheta was so exceptional that she had been introduced to the Florentine polite world without the customary preliminary of marriage. She could, almost everyone agreed, marry very nearly whomever and whenever she willed. Even now, after the number of years she had been going about with practically all her friends wedded, no one seriously criticized the Sanvianos for not insisting on a match with one of the several eligibles who had unquestionably presented themselves.

Gheta was slender and round; her complexion had the flawless pallid bloom of a gardenia; her eyes and hair were dark, and her lips an enticing scarlet thread. Perhaps her chin was a trifle lacking in definition, her voice a little devoid of warmth; but those were minor defects in a person so precisely

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radiant. Her dress was always noticeably lovely; at present she wore pink tulle over lustrous grey, with a high silver girdle, a narrow black velvet band and diamond clasp about her delicate full throat.

Anna Mantegazza was more elaborately gowned, in white embroidery, with a little French hat; but Anna Mantegazza was an American with millions, and elaboration was a commonplace with her. Lavinia wore only a simple white slip, confined about her flexible waist with a yellow ribbon; and she was painfully conscious of the contrast she presented to the two women seated in the front of the window.

The fact was that a whole fifth of the Sanvianos' income was spent on Gheta's clothes; and this left only the most meagre provision for Lavinia. But this, the latter felt, was just—still in the convent, she required comparatively little personal adornment; while the other's beauty demanded a worthy emphasis. Later Lavinia would have tulle and silver lace. She wished, however, that Gheta would get married; for Lavinia knew that even if she came home she would be held back until the older sister was settled. It was her opinion that Gheta was very silly to show such indifference to Cesare Orsi. Suddenly she longed to have men—not fat and good-natured like the Neapolitan banker, but austere and romantic—in love with her. She clasped her hands to her fine young breast and a delicate colour stained her cheeks. She stood very straight and her breathing quickened through parted lips.

She was disturbed by the echo of a voice from the cool depths of the house, and turned at approaching footfalls. A small man in correct English clothes, with a pointed bald head and a heavy nose, entered impulsively.

"It's Bembo," Lavinia announced flatly.

"Of course it's Bembo," he echoed, vivaciously. "Who's more faithful to the Casa Sanviano——"

"At tea time," Lavinia interrupted.

"Lavinia," her sister said, sharply, "don't be impertinent. There are so many strangers driving," she continued, to the man; "do stand and tell us who they are. You know every second person in Europe."

He pressed eagerly forward, and Anna Mantegazza turned and patted his hand.

"I wish you were so attentive to Pier and myself," she remarked, both light and serious. "I'd like to buy you—you're indispensable in Florence."

"Contessa!" he protested. "Delighted! At once."

"Bembo," Gheta demanded, "duty—who's that in the little carriage with the bells bowed over the horses?"

He leaned out over the grille, his beady, alert gaze sweeping the way below.

"Litolff," he pronounced without a moment's hesitation—"a Russian swell. The girl with him is——" He stopped with a side glance at Lavinia, a slight shrug.

"Positively, Lavinia," Gheta insisted again, more crossly, "you're a nuisance! When do you go back to school?"

"In a week," Lavinia answered, serenely.

With Bembo added to the others, she could see almost nothing of the scene below. Across the river the declining sun cast a rosy light on the great glossy hedges and clipped foliage of the Boboli Gardens; far to the left the paved height of the Piazzale Michelangelo rose above the sombre sweep of roofs and bridges; an aged bell rang harshly and mingled with the inconsequential clatter on the Lungarno. An overwhelming sense of the mystery of being stabbed, sharp as a knife, at her heart; a choking longing possessed her to experience all—all the wonders of life, but principally love.

"Look, Bembo!" Anna Mantegazza suddenly exclaimed. "No; there—approaching! Who's that singular person in the hired carriage?"

Her interest was so roused that Lavinia, once more forgetful of Gheta's sleeves, leaned over her sister's shoulder, and immediately distinguished the object of their curiosity.

An open cab was moving slowly, almost directly under the window, with a single patron—a slender man, sitting rigidly erect, in a short, black shell jacket, open upon white linen, a long black tie, and a soft narrow scarlet sash. He wore a wide-brimmed stiff felt hat slanted over a thin countenance burned by the sun as dark as green bronze; his face was as immobile as metal, too; it bore, as if permanently moulded, an expression of excessive contemptuous pride.

Bembo's voice rose in a babble of excited information.

"'Singular?' Why, that's one of the most interesting men alive. It's Abrego y Mochales, the greatest bull-fighter in existence, the Flower of Spain. I've seen him in the ring and at San Sebastian with the King; and I can assure you that one was hardly more important than the other. He's idolized by everyone in Spain and South America; women of all classes fall over each other with declarations and gifts."

As if he had heard the pronouncement of his name the man in the cab turned sharply and looked up. Gheta was leaning out, and his gaze fastened upon her with a sudden and extraordinary intensity. Lavinia saw that her sister, without dissembling her interest, sat forward, statuesque and lovely. It seemed to the former that the cab was an intolerable time passing; she wished to draw

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Gheta back, to cover her indiscretion from Anna Mantegazza's prying sight. She sighed with inexplicable relief when she saw that the man had driven beyond them and that he did not turn.

A bull-fighter! A blurred picture formed in Lavinia's mind from the various details she had read and heard of the cruelty of the Spanish national sport—torn horses, stiff on blood-soaked sand; a frenzied and savage populace; and charging bulls, drenched with red froth. She shuddered.

"What a brute!" She spoke aloud, unintentionally.

Gheta glanced at her out of a cool superiority, but Anna Mantegazza nodded vigorously.

"He would be a horrid person!" she affirmed.

"How silly!" Gheta responded. "It's an art, like the opera; he's an artist in courage. Personally I find it rather fascinating. Most men are so—so mild."

Lavinia knew that the other was thinking of Cesare Orsi, and she agreed with her sister that Orsi was far too mild. Without the Orsi fortune—he had much more even than Anna Mantegazza—Cesare would simply get nowhere. The Spaniard—Lavinia could not recall his name, although it hung elusively among her thoughts—was different; women of all classes, Bembo had said, pursued him with favours.

"You are going to the Guarinis' sale tomorrow afternoon? But, of course, everyone is. Well, if I come across Abrego y Mochales before then, and I'm almost certain to, and he'll come, I'll bring him. He's as proud as the devil—duchesses, you see—so no airs with him. The Flower of Spain. A king of sport sits high at the table——" He went on, apparently interminable; but Lavinia turned away to where tea was being laid in a far angle.

Others approached over the tiled hall, and the Marchese Sanviano entered with Cesare Orsi. The window was deserted, and the women trailed gracefully toward the bubbling minor note of the alcohol lamp. Both Sanviano and Orsi were big men—the former, like Bembo, wore English clothes; but Orsi's ungainly body had been tightly garbed by a Southern military tailor, making him—Lavinia thought—appear absolutely ridiculous. His collar was both too tight and too high, although perspiration promised relief from the latter.

A general and unremarkable conversation mingled with the faint rattle of passing cups and low directions to a servant. Lavinia was seated next to Cesare Orsi, but she was entirely oblivious of his heavy, kindly face and almost anxiously benevolent gaze. He spoke to her, and because she had comprehended nothing of his speech she smiled at him with an absent and illuminating charm. He smiled back, happy in her apparent pleasure; and his good-nature was so insistent that she was impelled to reward it with a remark.

She thought, she said, that Gheta was particularly lovely this afternoon. He agreed eagerly; and Lavinia wondered whether she had been clumsy. She simply couldn't imagine marrying Cesare Orsi, but she knew that such a match for Gheta was freely discussed, and she hoped that her sister would not make difficulties.

Lavinia presently thanked him and rose; the discussion about the tea table became unbearably stupid, no better than the flat chatter of the nuns at school.

Her room was small and barely furnished, with a thin rug over the stone floor, and opened upon the court about which the house was built.

Lavinia stayed for a long while at the ledge of her window. Her hair, which she wore braided in a smooth heavy rope, slid out and hung free. She dressed slowly, changing from one plain gown to another hardly less simple.

Now her hair annoyed her, swinging childishly about her waist, and she secured it in an instinctively effective coil on the top of her head. She decided to leave it there for dinner. Her mother was away for the night; and she knew that Gheta's sarcasm would only stir their father to a teasing mirth.

Later, Gheta departed for a ball, together with the Marchese Sanviano—to be dropped at his club—and Lavinia was left alone. Gheta would be nominally in the charge of Anna Mantegazza; but Lavinia knew how laxly the American would hold her responsibility. She wished, moving disconsolately under high painted ceilings through the semi-gloom of still formal chambers, that she was a recognized beauty—free, like Gheta.

The drawing-room from which they had watched the afternoon procession was in complete darkness, save for the luminous rectangle of the window they had occupied. Its drapery was still disarranged. Lavinia crossed the room and stood at the grille. The lights strung along the river, curving away like uniform pale bubbles, cast a thin illumination over the Lungarno, through which a solitary vehicle moved. Lavinia idly watched it approach, but her interest increased as it halted directly opposite where she stood. A man got quickly out—a lithe figure with a broad-brimmed hat slanted across his eyes. It was, she realized with an involuntary quickening of her blood, Abrego y Mochales. A second man followed, tendered him a curiously-shaped object, and stood by the waiting cab while the bull-

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fighter walked deliberately forward. He stopped under the window and shifted the thing in his hands.

A rich chord of strings vibrated through the night, another followed, and then a brief pattern of sound was woven from the serious notes of a guitar. Lavinia shrank back within the room—it was, incredibly, a serenade on the stolid Lungarno. It was for Gheta! The romance of the south of Spain had come to life under their window. A voice joined the instrument, melodious and melancholy, singing an air with little variation, but with an insistent burden of desire. The voice and the guitar mingled and fluctuated, drifting up from the pavement exotic and moving. Lavinia could comprehend but little of the Spanish :—

> I followed through the acacias,
> But it was only the wind.
> . . . . looked for you beyond the limes——

The thrill at her heart deepened until tears wet her cheeks. It was for Gheta, but it overwhelmed Lavinia with a formless and aching emotion; it was for Gheta, but her response was instant and uncontrollable. It seemed to Lavinia that the sheer beauty of life, which had moved her so sharply, had been magnified unbearably; she had never dreamed of the possibilities of such ecstasy or such delectable grief.

The song ended abruptly, with a sharp jarring note. The man by the carriage moved deferentially forward and took the guitar. She could see the minute pulsating sparks of cigarettes; heard a direction to the driver. Abrego y Mochales and the other got into the cab and it turned and shambled away. Lavinia Sanviano moved forward mechanically, gazing after the dark vanishing shape on the road. She was shaken, almost appalled, by the feeling that stirred her. A momentary terror of living swept over her; the thrills persisted; her hands were icy cold. She had been safely a child until now, when she had lost that small security, and gained—what?

She studied herself, clad in her coarse nightgown with narrow lace, in her inadequate mirror. The colour had left her cheeks and her eyes shone darkly from shadows. "Lavinia Sanviano!" she spoke aloud, with the extraordinary sensation of addressing, in her reflection, a stranger. She could never, never wear her hair down again, she thought with an odd pang.

II.

GHETA invariably took breakfast in her room. She was sitting in bed, the chocolate pot on a painted table at her side, when Lavinia entered.

A maid was putting soft paper in the sleeves of Gheta's ball dress, and Lavinia, finding an unexpected reluctance to proceed with what she had come to say, watched the servant's deft care.

"Mochales was here last night," Lavinia finally remarked, abruptly—"that is, he stood in the street and serenaded you."

Gheta put her cup down with a clatter.

"How charming!" she exclaimed. "And I missed it for an insufferable affair. He stood under the window——"

"With a guitar," Lavinia proceeded evenly. "It was very beautiful."

"Heavens! Bembo's going to fetch him to the Guarinis' sale, and I forgot and promised Anna Mantegazza to drive out to Arcetri! But Anna won't miss this. It was really a very pretty compliment."

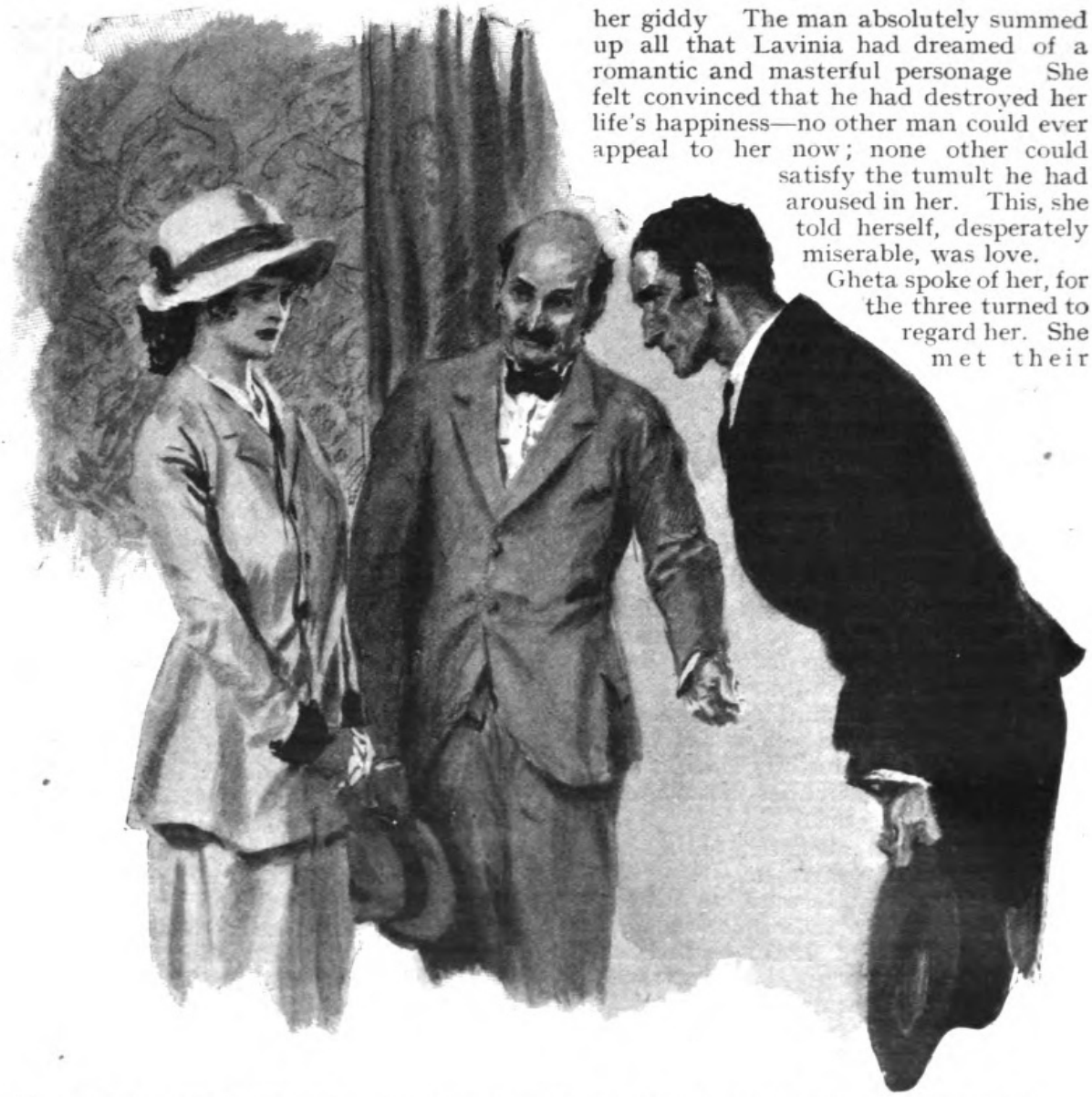
She spoke with a trivial satisfaction that jarred painfully on Lavinia's memory of the past night. Gheta calmly accepted the serenade as another tribute to her beauty; Lavinia could imagine what Anna Mantegazza and her sister would say, and they both seemed commonplace—even a little vulgar—to her acutely sensitive being. She suddenly lost her desire to resemble Gheta; her sister diminished in her estimation. The elder, Lavinia realized with an unsparing detachment, was enveloped in a petty vanity acquired in an atmosphere of continuous flattery; it had chilled her heart.

The Guarinis, who had been overtaken by misfortune, and whose household goods were being disposed of at public sale, occupied a large gloomy floor on the Via Cavour. The rooms were crowded. The sale was progressing in one of the larger *salons*, but the crowd circulated in a slow, solid undulation through every room. Gheta and Anna Mantegazza had sought the familiar comfortable corner of an entresol, and were seated. Lavinia was standing tensely, with a labouring breast, when Bembo suddenly appeared with the man whom he had called the Flower of Spain.

"The Contessa Mantegazza," Bembo said, suavely; "Signorina Sanviano, this is Abrego y Mochales."

The bull-fighter bowed with magnificent flexibility. A hot resentment possessed Lavinia at Bembo's apparent ignoring of her; but he had not seen her at first and hastened to repair his omission. Lavinia inclined her head stiffly. An increasing confusion enveloped her, but she forced herself to gaze directly into Mochales' still, black eyes. His face, she saw, was gaunt, the ridges of his skull apparent under the bronzed skin. His hair, worn in a queue, was pinned in a flat disc on his head, and small gold loops had been riveted in his ears; but these peculiarities of garb were lost in the man's intense virility, his patent brute force. His fine

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"LAVINIA INCLINED HER HEAD STIFFLY. AN INCREASING CONFUSION ENVELOPED HER, BUT SHE FORCED HERSELF TO GAZE DIRECTLY INTO MOCHALES' STILL, BLACK EYES."

perfumed linen, the touch of scarlet at his waist, his extremely high-heeled patent-leather boots under soft uncreased trousers, served only to emphasize his resolute metal—they resembled an embroidered and tasseled scabbard that held a keen, thin, and dangerous blade.

Anna Mantegazza extended her hand in the American fashion, and Gheta smiled from—Lavinia saw—her best facial angle. The Spaniard regarded Gheta Sanviano so fixedly that after a moment she turned, in a species of constraint, to Anna. The latter spoke with her customary facility and the man responded gravely.

They stood a little aside from Lavinia; she only partly heard their remarks, but she saw that Abrego y Mochales' attention never strayed from her sister. Vicariously it made her giddy The man absolutely summed up all that Lavinia had dreamed of a romantic and masterful personage She felt convinced that he had destroyed her life's happiness—no other man could ever appeal to her now; none other could satisfy the tumult he had aroused in her. This, she told herself, desperately miserable, was love.

Gheta spoke of her, for the three turned to regard her. She met their scrutiny with a doubtful half smile, which vanished as Anna Mantegazza made a light comment upon her hair being so newly up. Lavinia detested the latter with a sudden and absurd intensity. She saw Anna, with a veiled glance at Gheta, make an apology and leave to join an eddy of familiars that had formed in the human stream sweeping by. Mochales stood very close to her sister, speaking seriously, while Gheta nervously fingered the short veil hanging from her gay straw hat.

A familiar kindly voice sounded suddenly in Lavinia's ears, and Cesare Orsi joined her. He was about to move forward toward Gheta; but, before he could attract her attention, she disappeared in the crowd with the Spaniard.

"Who was it?" he inquired. "He resembles a juggler."

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Lavinia elaborately masked her hot resentment at this fresh stupidity. She must not, she felt, allow Orsi to discover her feeling for Abrego y Mochales; that was a secret she must keep for ever from the profane world. She would die, perhaps at a terribly advanced age, with it locked in her heart. But if Gheta married him she would go into a convent.

"A bull-fighter, I believe," she said, carelessly.

"In other words, a brute," Orsi continued. Such men are not fit for the society of—of your sister. One would think his mere presence would make her ill. Yet she seemed quite pleased."

"Strange!" Lavinia spoke with innocent eyes.

It was like turning a knife in her wound to agree apparently with Cesare Orsi—rather, she wanted to laugh at him coldly and leave him standing alone; but she must cultivate her defences. There was, too, a sort of negative pleasure in misleading the banker, a sort of torment not unlike that enjoyed by the early martyrs.

Cesare Orsi regarded her with new interest and approbation.

"You're a sensible girl," he proclaimed; "and extremely pretty in the bargain." He added this in an accent of profound surprise, as if she had suddenly grown presentable under his eyes. "In some ways," he went on, gathering conviction, "you are as handsome as Gheta."

"Thank you, Signor Orsi," Lavinia responded with every indication of a modesty which, in fact, was the indifference of a supreme contempt.

"I have been blind," he asseverated, vivaciously gesticulating with his thick hands.

Lavinia studied him with a remote young brutality, from his fluffy disarranged hair, adhering to his wet brow, to his extravagantly pointed shoes. The ridiculous coral charm hanging from his heavy watch-chain, a violent green handkerchief, an insufferable cameo pin—all contributed pleasurably to the lowering of her opinion of him.

"I must find Gheta," she pronounced, suddenly aware of her isolation with Cesare Orsi in the crowd, and of curious glances. Orsi immediately took her arm, but she eluded him. "Go first, please; we can get through sooner that way."

They progressed from room to room, thoroughly exploring the dense throng about the auctioneer, but without finding either Gheta, Anna Mantegazza, or the bull-fighter.

"I can't think how she could have forgotten me!" Lavinia declared with increasing annoyance. "It's clear that they have all gone."

"Don't agitate yourself," Cesare Orsi begged. "Sanviano will be absolutely contented to have you in my care. I am delighted. You shall go home directly in my carriage." He conducted her, with a show of form that in anyone else or at another time she would have enjoyed hugely, to the street, where he handed her into an immaculately-glossy and corded victoria, drawn by a big stamping bay, and stood with his hat off until she had rolled away.

They swept smoothly on rubber tyres into the Lungarno and rapidly approached her home. The carriage stopped before the familiar white façade, built of marble in the pseudo-severity of the early nineteenth century, and the porter swung open the great iron gate to the courtyard. Lavinia mounted the square white shaft of the stairs to the Sanvianos' floor with a deepening sense of injury. She would make it plain to Gheta that she was no longer a child to be casually overlooked.

A small room, used in connection with the dining-room for coffee and smoking, gave directly on the hall; there she saw her father sitting, with his hat still on, his face stamped with an almost comical dismay, and holding an unlighted cigar.

"Gheta left me atthe Guarinis'," Lavinia halted impetuously. "If it hadn't been for Signor Orsi I shouldn't be here yet; I was completely ignored."

"Heavens!" her father exclaimed, waving her away. "Another feminine catastrophe! Go to your sister and mother. My head is in a whirl."

Her mother, then, had returned. She went forward and was suddenly startled by hearing Gheta's voice rise in a wail of despairing misery. She hurried forward to her sister's room. Gheta, fully dressed, was prostrate, face down, upon her bed, shaken by a strangled sobbing that at intervals rose to a thin hysterical scream. The Marchesa Sanviano, still in her travelling-dress and close-fitting black hat, sat by her elder daughter's side, trying vainly to calm the tumult. In the background the maid, her face streaming with sympathetic tears, was hovering distractedly with a jar of volatile salts.

"Mamma," Lavinia demanded, torn by extravagant fears, "what has happened?"

The marchesa momentarily turned a concerned countenance.

"Your sister," she said, seriously, "has found some wrinkles on her forehead."

Lavinia with difficulty restrained a sharp giggle. Gheta's grief and their mother's anxiety at first seemed so foolishly disproportionate to their cause. Then a realization of what such an occurrence meant to Gheta dawned upon her. To an acknow-

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ledged beauty like Gheta Sanviano the marks of Time were an absolute tragedy; they threatened her on every plane of her being.

"But when——" Lavinia began.

"They—Anna Mantegazza and she—went to the dressing-room at the Guarinis', where, it seems, Anna discovered them—sympathetically, of course."

Gheta's sobbing slowly subsided under the marchesa's urgent plea that unrestrained emotion would only deepen her trouble. She did not appear at dinner; and afterward the marchese, his wife, and Lavinia sat wrapped in a gloomy silence. The marchesa was still handsome, in spite of increasing weight. The grey gaze inherited by Lavinia had escaped the parent; her eyes were soft and dense, like brown velvet. She was a woman of decision, and now she brought her hands smartly together.

"We have waited too long with Gheta; we should not have counted so confidently on her beauty; time flies so treacherously. She must marry as soon as possible."

"Thank God, there's Cesare Orsi!" her husband responded.

Lavinia was gazing inward at the secretly-enshrined image of the Flower of Spain.

III.

GHETA SANVIANO often passed a night at the Mantegazzas' villa on the Height of Castena, a long mile from the city.

Lavinia, too, knew the dwelling well, for Sanviano and Pier Mantegazza had been intimate from their similar beginnings, and she had played there as a child. However, she had never been regularly asked with Gheta; and when that occurred—Gheta indifferently delivered Anna Mantegazza's message—and her mother acquiesced, Lavinia had a renewed sense of her growing importance.

She went out early, in the heat of midday, a time that fitted best with the involved schedule of the Sanvianos' single equipage—Anna would take her sister directly from a luncheon at the Ginoris'. Lavinia looked with mingled anticipation and relief at the approaching graceful façade of the otherwise sombre abode of the Mantegazzas which stood on an eminence, circled by austere pines. Within it was pleasantly cool and dark after the white blaze without.

Pier Mantegazza was standing before a high inclined table, which bore a number of blackened and shapeless medallions. He was a famous numismatic—a tall, stooping man, slightly lame, and enveloped in a premature grey ill-health that resembled clinging cobwebs. He bent and brushed Lavinia's forehead with his crisp moustache, and then returned to the delicate manipulation of a magnifying glass and a small blue bottle of acid. She left him for a deep chair and a surprising French romance by Remy de Gourmont. At a long philosophical dialogue the book drooped, and she thought of Anna Mantegazza and her husband.

She wondered whether they were happy. But she decided, measuring that condition solely by her own requirement, that such a state was impossible for them. It had certainly been a marriage for money and position; prior to the ceremony the Casa Mantegazza had been closed for years, and Pier Mantegazza occupied a small establishment near the Military Hospital, on the Via San Gallo. Anna Cane had arrived in Rome, without family or credentials, and unknown to the American Embassy other than by amazing deposits at the best banks. But she did have, in addition to this, a pungent charm and undeniable force and good taste. It was said that the moment she had seen Mantegazza's villa she had decided to possess it, even at the price of its sere, withdrawn holder.

She had gone at once into the best Florentine and Roman society. That was ten years before, but Lavinia realized that she had never successfully assimilated the Italian social formula. She mixed the most diverse elements of their world wilfully and found enjoyment in bringing about amusing situations. She seemed devoid of the foundations of proper caution; in fact, she mocked at them openly. And if she had not been a model Catholic, and herself above the slightest moral question, even Mantegazza could not have carried her among her own circles. As it was, people flocked to her elaborate parties, torn between the hope of being amazed and the fear that they should furnish the hub of the occasion.

Gheta and her hostess arrived later. The former, it appeared to Lavinia, looked disconcerted; and it was evident that she had been remonstrating with Anna Mantegazza. The other laughed provokingly.

"Nonsense!" she declared. "It was too good to miss; besides, you're an old campaigner."

A stair of flagging, turning sharply round a stone pillar, led incongruously from the light French furnishings to the chamber where Lavinia was to sleep. A Renaissance bed, made of thick quilting directly upon the floor, was covered with gilt ecclesiastical embroidery; and a movable tub stood in a stone corner. The narrow deep windows overlooked Florence, a sombre expanse of roofing; and, coming rapidly toward the villa, Lavinia could see a tall dog-cart, with a groom and two passengers. They were men; and, as they drew nearer, Lavinia—with a sudden pounding of her heart—realized the cause of the slight friction between the

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two women. The cart bore Cesare Orsi and Mochales the bull-fighter, the Flower of Spain. It was a part of Anna Mantegazza's humour that the men, so essentially antagonistic, should arrive together clinging precariously on the high, insecure trap.

Tea was served at five on the terrace, and Lavinia dressed with minute care. Gheta, she knew, had brought a new lavender lawn with little gold velvet buttons and lace; while she had nothing but the familiar coarse white mull. But she had fresh ribbons, and she gazed with satisfaction at her firm, faintly rosy countenance. She would have no wrinkles for years to come. However, she thought, with a return to her sense of tragic gloom, such considerations were of little moment, as Abrego y Mochales would scarcely be aware of her existence; he would never know. Perhaps, years after——

She purposely delayed her appearance on the terrace until the others had assembled, and then quietly took possession of a chair. Cesare Orsi greeted her with effusive warmth; the Spaniard bowed ceremoniously.

Lavinia luxuriated in her unhappiness. Mochales, she decided, must be the handsomest man in existence. His unchanging gravity fascinated her—the man's face, his voice, his dignified gestures, were all steeped in a splendid melancholy.

"I am a peasant," he said, apparently addressing them all, but with his eyes upon Gheta, "from Estremadura, in the mountains. The life there was very hard, and that was unfortunate for me; the food was scarce, and that was good too. If I ate like the grandees a bull would end me in the hot sun of the first *fiesta;* I'd double up like a pancake. I must work all the time—run for miles and play *pelota*."

Lavinia was possessed by a new contempt for her kind, which she centred upon Orsi, clumsy and stupidly smiling. It was clear that he couldn't run a mile; in fact, he admitted that he detested all exercise. How absurd he looked in his tight plaited jacket! It appeared that he was always perspiring; a crime, she felt sure—with entire disregard of its fatal consequences—that Mochales never committed.

"A friend of ours—it was Bembo—said that he saw you at San Sebastian with your King," Anna Mantegazza put in.

"Why not? But Alfonso is a fine boy; he understands the business of Royalty. Every year I dedicate a magnificent bull to the King on his name day."

"Will you dedicate one to me?" Gheta asked, carelessly.

"The best in Andalusia," he responded, with fire.

Cesare Orsi made a slight sharp exclamation, and Lavinia's heart beat painfully. The former turned to her with sudden determination.

"Were you comfortable in my carriage," he demanded, "and fetched home at a smart pace?"

Lavinia thanked him.

"You are always so quiet," he complained. "I'm certain there's a great deal in that wise young head worth hearing."

"Lavinia is still in the schoolroom," Gheta explained, brutally. "Yesterday she put up her hair; to-day Anna Mantegazza invites her, and we have an effect."

Anna Mantegazza turned to the younger with a new veiled scrutiny. Her gaze rested for an instant on Orsi and then moved contemplatively to Gheta and Abrego y Mochales. It was evident that her thoughts were very busy; a faint sparkle appeared in her eyes, a fresh vivacity animated her manner. Suddenly she included Lavinia in her remarks; she put queries to the girl patently intended to draw her out. Gheta grew uneasy and then cross.

"I'm sick of sitting here," she declared; "let's walk about. It's cooler, and Pier Mantegazza's place is always worth investigation." She rose and waited for Cesare Orsi, then led the small procession from under the striped tea kiosk down the terrace. The way grew steep and she rested a hand on Orsi's arm. Anna, Lavinia, and the Flower of Spain followed together, until the first moved forward to join the leaders. Lavinia's gaze was obscured by a sort of warm mist; she clasped her hands to keep them from trembling. In a narrow flagged turn Mochales brushed her shoulder. He scarcely moved his eyes from Gheta's back. Once he gazed sombrely at the girl beside him, and she responded with a pale, questioning smile.

"I have had a great misfortune," he told her.

"Oh, I'm terribly, terribly sorry!"

"I've lost a blessed coin that interceded for me since the first day I went in the bull ring. I'd give a thousand wax candles for its return. Now—when I need everything," he continued as if to himself. "Your sister is beautiful," he added abruptly.

"Everybody thinks so," Lavinia replied in a voice she endeavoured to make enthusiastic. "She has had tens of admirers here and at Rome and Lucca." There she knew she should stop; but she continued: "Cesare Orsi is very persistent and tremendously rich."

Mochales made a short, unintelligible remark in Spanish. He twisted a cigarette with lightning-like rapidity and only one hand. Together they looked at Orsi's broad, ungainly back, and the bull-fighter's lips tightened, exposing a glimmer of his immaculate teeth.

They passed a neat whitewashed cottage,

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where an old couple stood bowing abjectly, and came on a series of long, pale-brown buildings and walls.

"The stables and barn," Lavinia explained.

Anna Mantegazza turned.

"You may see something of interest here," she called to Mochales.

A series of steps, made by projecting stones, rose to the top of an eight-foot wall up which Anna unexpectedly led the way. The wall was broad, afforded a comfortable footing, and enclosed a straw-littered yard. A number of doors led into a barn, and into one some men were urging refractory cattle. In a corner a small, compact bull, with the rapierlike horns of the mountain breeds, was secured by a nose ring and a short chain; and to the latter the men turned when the other animals had been confined. Two threatened the animal with long poles, while a third unfastened the chain from the wall and then all endeavoured to drive him within. Abrego y Mochales stood easily above, watching these clumsy efforts.

Suddenly the bull stopped, plunged his front hoofs into the soft mould of the stable yard, and swept his head from side to side with a broken, hoarse bellow. The men prodded him, with urgent cries; but the bull suddenly whirled, snapping the poles, and there was an immediate scattering.

The sight of the retreating forms apparently enraged the animal, for he charged with astonishing speed and barely missed horning the last man to fall over the barricade of a half door. Mochales smiled; he called familiarly to the bull. Then he stooped and vaulted lightly down into the yard. Lavinia gave a short exclamation; she was cold with fear. Orsi looked on without any emotion visible on his heavy face. Anna Mantegazza leaned forward, tense with interest. "*Bravo!*" she called.

Gheta Sanviano smiled.

The bull did not see Mochales at first, then the man cried tauntingly. The bull turned and stood with a lowered, slowly-moving head, an uneasy tail. The Spaniard found a small milking-stool and, carrying it to the middle of the yard, sat and comfortably rolled another cigarette. He was searching for a match when the bull moved forward a pace; he had found and was striking it when the bull increased his pace; he was guarding the flame about the cigarette's end when the animal broke into a charging run.

The Flower of Spain inhaled a deep breath of smoke, which he expelled in deliberate globes.

"Oh, don't! Oh——" Lavina exclaimed, an arm before her eyes.

Mochales shifted easily from his seat, and apparently in the same instant the bull crushed the stool to splinters.

"*Bravo! Bravo!*" Anna Mantegazza called again, and the man bowed until his extended hat rested on the ground.

He straightened slowly; the bull whirled about and flung himself forward. Abrego y Mochales now had one of the discarded poles; and, waiting until the horns had almost encircled him, he vaulted lightly and beautifully over the running animal's shoulder. He waited again, avoiding the infuriated charge by a scant step; and, when the bull stopped, he had Mochales' hat placed squarely upon his horns.

Lavinia watched now in fascinated terror; she could not remove her gaze from the slim figure in the short black jacket and narrow crimson sash. At the moment when her tension relaxed, Mochales, with a short running step, vaulted cleanly to the top of the wall. His cigarette was still burning. She wanted desperately to add her praise to Anna Mantegazza's enthusiastic plaudits, Gheta's subtle smile; but only the utmost banalities occurred to her.

They descended the stone steps and slowly mounted toward the house. Cesare Orsi resolutely dropped back beside Lavinia.

"You are really superb!" he told her, in his highly-coloured Neapolitan manner. "Most women—Anna Mantegazza for example—are like children before such a show as that back there. Your sister, too, was pleased; it appealed to her vanity, as the fellow intended it should. But you only disliked it. I could see that in your attitude. It was the circus—that's all."

Lavinia gazed at him out of an unfathomable contempt. She thought: What a fool he is! It wasn't Abrego y Mochales' courage that appealed to her most, although that had afforded her an exquisite thrill, but his powerful grace, his absolute physical perfection. Orsi was heated again and his tie had slipped up over the back of his collar.

She recalled the first talk she had had with him about Mochales and the manner in which she had masked her true feeling for the latter.

How easy Orsi had been to mislead! Now she was seized by the desire to show him the actual state of her mind; she wanted, in bitter sentences, to tell him how infinitely superior the Spaniard was to such fat, easy beings as himself. She longed to make clear to him exactly what it was that women admired in men—romance and daring and splendid strength. It might suit Gheta, who had wrinkles, to encourage such men as Cesare Orsi; their wealth might appeal to cold and material minds, but they could never hope to inspire passion; no one would ever cherish for them a hopeless lifelong love.

"Do you know," Orsi declared, with firm

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"THE SPANIARD FOUND A SMALL MILKING-STOOL, SAT, AND COMFORTABLY ROLLED ANOTHER CIGARETTE. THE BULL BROKE INTO A CHARGING RUN; MOCHALES SHIFTED EASILY FROM HIS SEAT, AND APPARENTLY IN THE SAME INSTANT THE ANIMAL CRUSHED THE STOOL TO SPLINTERS."

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conviction, "you are even handsomer than your sister!"

"Fool! fool! fool!" But she could not, of course, say a word of what was in her thoughts. She met his admiring gaze with a blank face, conscious of how utterly her exterior belied and hid the actual Lavinia Sanviano. She felt wearily old, sophisticated. In her room, dressing for the evening, she made up her mind that she must have a black dinner gown—later she would wear no other shade.

IV.

ANNA MANTEGAZZA knocked and entered just as Lavinia had finished with her hair and was slipping into the familiar white dress. There had been, within the last few hours, a perceptible change in the former's attitude toward her. Lavinia realized that Anna Mantegazza regarded her with a new interest, a greater and more personal friendliness.

"My dear Lavinia!" she exclaimed, critically overlooking the other's preparations. "You look very appealing—like a snowdrop, exactly. I should say the toilet for Sunday at the convent; but no longer appropriate outside. Really, I must speak to the marchesa—parents are so slow to see the differences in their own family. Gheta has been a little over-emphasized.

"I wonder," she continued, with glowing vivacity, "if you would allow me—I assure you it would give me the greatest pleasure in the world. Your figure is a thousand times better than mine; but, thank Heaven, I'm still slender. A little evening dress from Paris! It should really do you very well. Will you accept it from me? I'd like to give you something, Lavinia; and it has never been out of its box."

She turned and was out of the room before Lavinia could reply. There was no reason why she shouldn't take a present from Anna. Pier Mantegazza and her father had been lifelong friends, and his wife was an intimate of the Sanvianos. It would not, probably, be black. It wasn't. Anna returned, followed by her maid, who bore carefully over her arm a shimmering mass of glowing pink.

"Now!" Anna Mantegazza cried. "Your hair is very pretty, very original—but hardly for a dress like this. Sara!"

The maid moved quietly forward and directed an appraising gaze at Lavinia.

"I see exactly, madame," she assured Anna; and with her deft hands she took down Lavinia's laboriously-arranged hair.

She drew it back from the brow apparently as simply as before, twisted it into a low knot slightly eccentric in shape, and recut a fringe. Lavinia's eyes seemed bluer, her delicate flush more elusive; the shape of her face appeared changed, it was more pointed and had a new wilful charm.

"The stockings," Anna commanded.

Dressed, Lavinia Sanviano stood curiously before the long mirror; she saw a fresh Lavinia that was yet the old; and she was absorbing her first great lesson in the magic of clothes. The gown Lavinia wore resembled, in all its implications, an orchid. There was a whisper here of satin, a pale note of green, a promise of chiffon. Her crisp round shoulders were bare; her finely-moulded arms were clouded, as it were, with a pink mist; the skirt was full, incredibly airy; yet every movement was draped by a suave flowing and swaying.

Lavinia recognized that she had been immensely enriched in effect; it was not a question of mere beauty—beauty here gave way to a more subtle and potent consideration. It was a potency which she instinctively shrank from probing. For a moment she experienced, curiously enough, a gust of passionate resentment, followed by a quickly-passing melancholy, a faint regret.

Anna Mantegazza and the maid radiated with satisfaction at the result of their effort. The former murmured a phrase that bore Gheta's name, but Lavinia caught nothing else. The maid said:—

"Without a doubt, madame."

Lavinia lingered in her room, strangely reluctant to go down and see her sister. She was embarrassed by her unusual appearance, and dreaded the prominence of the inevitable exclamations. At last she was obliged to proceed. The rest stood by the entrance of the dining-room. Anna Mantegazza was laughing at a puzzled expression on the good-natured countenance of Cesare Orsi; Gheta was slowly waving a fan of gilded feathers; Abrego y Mochales was standing rigid and sombrely handsome; and, as usual, Pier Mantegazza was late.

Gheta Sanviano turned and saw Lavinia approaching, and the elder's face, always pale, grew suddenly chalky; it was drawn, and the wrinkles, carefully treated with paste, became visible about her eyes. Her hands shook a little as she took a step forward.

"What does this mean, Lavinia?" she demanded. "Why did I know nothing about that dress?"

"I knew nothing myself until a little bit ago," Lavinia explained, apologetically, filled with a formless pity for Gheta. "Isn't it pretty? Anna Mantegazza gave it to me."

She could see, over Gheta's shoulder, Cesare Orsi staring at her in idiotic surprise.

"Don't you like it, Gheta?" Anna asked.

Gheta Sanviano didn't answer, but closed her eyes for a moment in an effort to control the anger that shone in them. The silence

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deepened to constraint, and then she laughed lightly.

"Quite a woman of fashion!" she observed of Lavinia. "Fancy! It's a pity that she must go back to the convent so soon."

Her eyes while she was speaking were directed toward Anna Mantegazza and the resentment changed to hatred. The other shrugged her shoulders indifferently and moved toward the dining-room, catching Lavinia's arm in her own.

Mantegazza entered at the soup and was seated on Gheta's right; Cesare Orsi was on Anna's left; and Lavinia sat between the two men, with Mochales opposite. Whatever change had taken place in her looks made absolutely no impression upon the latter; it was clear that he saw no one besides Gheta Sanviano.

In the candlelight his face more than ever resembled bronze; his hair was dead-black; above the white linen his head was like a superb effigy of an earlier and different race from the others. It was almost savage in its still austerity. Cesare Orsi, too, said little, which was extraordinary for him. If Lavinia had made small mark on Mochales, at least she had overpowered the other to a ludicrous degree. It seemed that he had never before half observed her; he even muttered to himself and smiled uncertainly when she chanced to gaze at him.

But what the others lacked conversationally Anna Mantegazza more than supplied; she was at her best, and that was very sparkling, touched with malice and understanding, and absolute independence. She insisted on including Lavinia in every issue. At first Lavinia was only confused by the attention pressed on her; she retreated, growing more inarticulate at every sally. Then she became easier; spurred partly by Gheta's direct unpleasantness and partly by the consciousness of her becoming appearance, she retorted with spirit; engaged Pier Mantegazza in a duet of verbal confetti. She gazed challengingly at Abrego y Mochales, but got no other answer than a grave perfunctory inclination.

She thought of an alternative to the black gowns and unrelieved melancholy—she might become the gayest member of the gay Roman world, be known throughout Italy for her reckless exploits, her affairs and gowns, all the while hiding her passion for the Flower of Spain. It would be a vain search for forgetfulness, with an early death in an atmosphere of roses and champagne. Gheta was gazing at her so crossly that she took a sip of Mantegazza's brandy; it burned her throat cruelly, but she concealed the choking with a smile of high bravado.

After dinner they progressed to a drawing-room that filled an entire end of the villa.

Cesare Orsi sat at Lavinia's side, quickly finishing one long black cigar and lighting another; Pier Mantegazza and Mochales smoked cigarettes. Anna was smoking, but Gheta had refused. Lavinia's feeling for her sister had changed from pity to total indifference. The elder had been an overbearing and thoughtless superior; and now, when Lavinia felt in some subtle, inexplicable manner that Gheta was losing rank, her store of sympathy was small. Lavinia hoped that she would marry Orsi immediately and leave the field free for herself.

"Honestly," Orsi murmured, "more beautiful than your——"

She stopped him with an impatient gesture, wondering what Mochales was saying to Gheta. A possibility suddenly filled her with dread—it was evident that the Spaniard was growing hourly more absorbed in Gheta, and the latter might—— Lavinia could not support the possibility of Abrego y Mochales married to her sister. But, she reassured herself, there was little danger of that—Gheta would never make a sacrifice for emotion; she would be sure of the comfortable material thing, and now more than ever.

Anna Mantegazza moved to a piano, which, in the obscurity, she began to play. The notes rose deliberate and melodious. Gheta Sanviano told Orsi:—

"That's *Iris*. Do you remember, we heard it at the Pergola in the winter?"

"Do go over to her," Lavinia whispered.

He rose heavily and went to Gheta's side, and Lavinia waited expectantly for Mochales to change too. The Spaniard shifted, but it was toward the piano, where he stood with the rosy reflection of his cigarette on a moody countenance. It was Pier Mantegazza who sat beside Lavinia.

Suddenly a step sounded behind her; she turned hopefully, but it was only Cesare Orsi.

"The others have gone outside," he told her, and she noticed that the piano had stopped.

Mantegazza rose and bowed in mock serious formality, at which Lavinia shrugged an impatient shoulder and walked with Orsi across the room and out upon the terrace.

Florence had sunk into a dark chasm of night, except for the curving double row of lights that marked the Lungarno and the indifferent illumination of a few principal squares. Orsi was standing very close to her, and she moved away; but he followed.

"Lavinia," he muttered, and suddenly his arm was about her waist.

She leaned back, pushing with both hands against his chest; but he swept her irresistibly up to him and kissed her clumsily. A cold rage possessed her. She stopped

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struggling; yet there was no need to continue—he released her immediately and opened a stammering apology.

"I am a madman," he admitted, abjectedly—"a little animal that ought to be shot. I don't know what came over me; my head was in a carnival. You must forgive or I shall be a maniac, I——"

She turned and walked swiftly into the house and mounted to her room. All the pleasure she had had in the evening, the new gown, evaporated, left her possessed by an utter loathing of self. Now, in the mirror, she seemed hateful, the clouded chiffon and airy clinging satin unspeakable. Looking back out of the dim glass was a stranger who had betrayed and cheapened her. Her pure serenity revolted against the currents of life sweeping down upon her, threatening to inundate her.

She unhooked her gown with trembling fingers and—once more in simple white—dropped into a deep chair, where she cried with short painful inspirations, her face pressed against her arm. Her emotion subsided, changed to a formless dread, and again to a black sense of helplessness. Suddenly she rose and mechanically shook loose her hair—footsteps were approaching. Her sister entered, pale and vindictive.

"You are to be congratulated," she proceeded, thinly; "you made a success with everybody—that is, with all but Mochales. It was for him, wasn't it? You were very clever, but you failed ridiculously."

Lavinia made no reply.

"I hope Mochales excuses you because of your greenness."

"Youth isn't any longer your crime," Lavinia retorted at last.

"That dress—it would suit Anna Mantegazza; but you looked only indecent."

"Perhaps you're right, Gheta," Lavinia said, unexpectedly. "I'm going to bed now, please."

Her balance, restored by sleep, was once more normal when she returned to the Lungarno. It was again late afternoon, the daily procession was returning from the Cascine, and Gheta was at the window, looking coldly down. The Marchesa Sanviano was knitting at prodigious speed a shapeless grey garment. They all turned when a servant entered:—

Signor Orsi wished to see the Marchese.

This unusual formality on the part of Cesare Orsi could have but one purpose, and Lavinia and their mother gazed significantly at the elder sister.

"The Marchese is dressing," his wife directed.

She drew a long breath of relief and nodded over her needles. Gheta raised her chin; her lips bore the half-contemptuous expression that lately had become habitual; her eyes were half closed.

Lavinia sat with her hands loose in her lap. She was wondering whether or not, should she make a vigorous protest, they would send her back to the convent. The new gown was carefully hung in her closet. Last night she had been idiotic.

The Marchese Sanviano appeared hurriedly and alone; his tie was crooked and his expression very much disturbed. His wife looked up, startled.

"What!" she demanded, directly. "Didn't he——"

"Yes," Sanviano replied, "he did! He wants to marry Lavinia."

Lavinia half rose, with a horrified protest; Gheta seemed suddenly turned to stone; the knitting fell unheeded from the marchesa's lap. Sanviano spread out his hands helplessly.

"Well," he demanded, "what could I do? A man with Orsi's blameless character and the Orsi banks!"

V.

THE house to which Cesare Orsi took Lavinia was built over the rim of a small steep island in the Bay of Naples, opposite Castellamare. It faced the city, rising in an amphitheatre of bright stucco and almond blossoms, across an expanse of glassy and incredibly blue water. It was evening, the colour of sky and bay was darkening, intensified by a vaporous rosy column where the ascending smoke of Vesuvius held the last upflung glow of the vanished sun. Lavinia could see from her window the pale distant quiver of the electric lights springing up along the villa Nazionale.

The dwelling itself drew a long irregular façade of white marble on its abrupt verdant screen—a series of connected pavilions, galleries, pergolas, belvedere, flowering walls, and airy chambers. There were tessellated remains from the time of the great pleasure-saturated Roman emperors, a later distinctly Moorish influence, quattrocento-painted eaves, an eighteenth-century turfed court, and a smoking-room with the startling coloured glass of the nineteenth.

The windows of Lavinia's room had no sashes; they were composed of a double marble arch, supported in the centre by a slender twisted marble column, with Venetian blinds. She stood in the opening, gazing fixedly over the water turning into night. She could hear, from the room beyond, her husband's heavy deliberate footfalls; and the sound filled her with a formless resentment. She wished to be justifiably annoyed by them, or him; but there was absolutely no cause. Cesare Orsi's character and disposition were alike beyond reproach—trans-

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parent and heroically optimistic. Since their marriage she had been insolent, she had been both captious and continuously indifferent, without unsettling the determined eager good-nature with which he met her moods.

During the week he went by launch into Naples in the interests of his banking, and did not return for luncheon; and she had long uninterrupted hours for the enjoyment of her pleasant domain. Altogether, his demands upon her were reasonable to the point of self-effacement. He laughed a great deal; this annoyed her youthful gravity and she remonstrated sharply more than once, but he only leaned back and laughed harder. Then she would either grow coldly disdainful or leave the room, followed by the echo of his merriment. There was something impervious, like armour, in his excellent humour. Apparently she could not get through it to wound him as she would have liked, and she secretly wondered.



"ORSI SWEPT HER IRRESISTIBLY UP TO HIM AND KISSED HER CLUMSILY."

He was prodigal in his generosity—the stores of the Via Roma were prepared to empty themselves at her desire. Cesare Orsi's wife was a figure of importance in Naples. She had been made welcome by the Neapolitan society—lawn fêtes had been given in villas under the burnished leaves of magnolias on the height of Vomero. The Cavaliere Nelli, Orsi's cousin and a retired colonel of Bersaglieri, entertained lavishly at dinner on the terrace of Bertolini's; she went out to old houses looking through aged and riven pines at the sea.

She would have enjoyed all this hugely if she had not been married to Orsi; but the continual reiteration of the fact that she was Orsi's wife filled her with an accumulating resentment. The implication that she had been exceedingly fortunate became more than she could bear. The consequence was that, as soon as it could be managed, she ceased going about.

She was now at the window, immersed in a melancholy sense of total isolation; the water stirring along the masonry below, a call from a shadowy fishing boat dropping down the bay, filled her with longing for the cheerful existence of the Lungarno. She had had a letter from Gheta that morning, the first from her sister since she had left Florence, brief but without any actual expression of ill will. After all was said, she had brought Gheta a great disappointment; if she had been in the elder's place probably she would have behaved no better. It occurred to her to ask Gheta to Naples. At least then she would have someone with whom to recall the pleasant trifles of past years. She would have liked to ask Anna Mantegazza, too; but this she knew was impossible—Gheta had not forgiven Anna for her part on the night that had resulted in Orsi's proposal for Lavinia.

She wondered, more obscurely, whether Abrego y Mochales was still in Florence. He loomed at the back of her thoughts, inscrutably dark and romantic. It piqued her that he had not made the slightest response to her palpable admiration. But he had been tremendously stirred by Gheta, who was never touched by such emotions. A desire to see Mochales grew insidiously out of her speculations; a desire to talk about him, hear his name. Lavinia deliberately shut her eyes to the fact that this last became her principal reason for wishing to see Gheta.

She told Cesare, with a diffidence which she was unable to overcome, that she had written asking her sister for a visit. Seemingly he didn't hear her. They were at

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breakfast, on the wine-red tiling of a pergola by the water, and he had shaken his fist, with a rueful curse, in the direction of Naples. Before him lay an open letter with an engraved page heading.

"I said," Lavinia repeated impatiently, "that Gheta will probably be here at the end of the week."

"The sacred camels!" Orsi exclaimed; then: "Oh, Gheta—good!" But he fell immediately into an angry reverie. "If I dared——" he muttered.

"What has stirred you up so?"

"It's difficult to explain to anyone not born in Naples. Here, you see, all is not in order, like Florence; we have had a stormy time between brigands and secret factions and foreign rulers; and certain societies sprang up, necessary once, but now—when one still exists—a source of bribery and nuisance. This letter, for example, congratulates me on the possession of a charming bride; it expresses the devotion of a hidden organization, but points out that in order to guarantee your safety in a city where the guards are admittedly insufficient it will be necessary for me to forward two thousand lire at once."

"You will, of course, ignore it."

"I shall certainly send the money at once."

"What a cowardly attitude!" Lavinia declared, contemptuously. "You allow yourself to be blackmailed like a common criminal."

Orsi laughed, his equilibrium quickly restored.

"I warned you that a stranger could not understand," he reminded her. "If the money weren't sent, in ten days or two weeks, perhaps, there would be a little accident on the Chiaja—your carriage would be run into; you would be upset, confused, angry. There would be profuse apologies, investigation, perhaps arrests; but nothing would come of it. If the money was still held back something a little more serious would occur. Nothing really dangerous, you understand; but finally the two thousand lire would be gladly paid over and the accidents would mysteriously cease."

"An outrage!" Lavinia asserted, and Orsi nodded.

"If you had an enemy," he continued, "you could have her gown ruined in the foyer of the San Carlos; if it were a man he would be caught at his club with an uncomfortable ace in his cuff. At least, so I'm assured. I haven't had any reason to look the society up yet." He laughed prodigiously. "Even murders are ascribed to it. Careful, Cesare, or a new valet will cut your throat some fine morning and your widow walk away with a more graceful man!"

"Your jokes are so stupid." Lavinia shrugged her shoulders.

He laid the letter on the table's edge and a wandering air bore it slanting to the floor, but he promptly recovered it.

"That must go in the safe," he ended; "it is well to have a slight grasp on those gentlemen."

He rose; and a few minutes later Lavinia saw his trim brown launch, with its awning and steersman in gleaming white, rushing through the bay toward Naples.

VI.

THE basin from which the launch plied lay inside a sea-wall enclosing a small placid rectangle with a walk all about and iron benches. Steps at the back, guarded by two great Pompeiian sandstone urns, and pressed by a luxuriant growth, led up to the villa. Gheta looked curiously about as she stepped from the launch and went forward with her brother-in-law. Lavinia followed, with Gheta's maid and a porter in the rear.

Lavinia realized that her sister looked badly; in the unsparing blaze of midday the wrinkles about her eyes were apparent, and they had multiplied. Although it was past the first of June, Gheta was wearing a linen dress of last year; and—as her maid unpacked—Lavinia saw the familiar pink tulle and the lavender gown with the gold velvet buttons.

"Your dressmaker is very late," she observed, thoughtlessly.

A slow flush spread over the other's countenance; she did not reply immediately, and Lavinia would have given a great deal to unsay her period.

"It isn't that," Gheta finally explained; "the family find that I am too expensive. You see, I haven't justified their hopes and they have been cutting down."

Her voice was thin, metallic; her features had sharpened like folded paper creased between the fingers.

"It's very good here," she went on, dancing about her room. It was hardly more than a marble gallery, the peristyle choked with flowering bushes, camellias and althea and hibiscus, barely furnished, and filled with drifting perfumes and the savour of the sea. "What a shame that these things must be got at a price!"

Lavinia glanced at her sharply; until the present moment that would have expressed her own attitude, but said by Gheta it seemed a little crude. It was, anyhow, painfully obvious, and she had no intention of showing Gheta the true state of her being.

"Isn't that so of everything—worth having?" she asked, adding the latter purely as a counter.

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The elder drew up her fine shoulders.

"That's very courageous of you," she admitted—"especially since everybody knew your opinion of Orsi. Heaven knows you made no effort to disguise your feeling to others."

Lavinia smiled calmly; Cesare was really very thoughtful, and she said so. Gheta replied at a sudden tangent:—

"Mochales has been a great nuisance."

Lavinia was gazing through an opening in the leaves at the sparkling blue plane of the bay. She made no movement, aware of her sister's unsparing curiosity turned upon her, and only said:—

"Really?"

"Spaniards are so tempestuous," Gheta continued; "he's been whispering a hundred mad schemes in my ear. He gave up an important engagement in Madrid rather than leave Florence. I have been almost stirred by him, he is so slender and handsome. Simply every woman—except perhaps me—is in love with him"

"There's no danger of your loving anyone beside yourself."

"I saw him the day before I left; told him where I was going. Then I had to beg him not to take the same train. He said he was going to Naples, anyhow, to sail from there for Spain. He will be at the Grand Hotel, and I gave him permission to see me here once."

Lavinia revolved slowly.

"Why not? He turned my head round at least twice." She moved towards the door. "Ring whenever you like," she said; "there are servants for everything."

In her room she wondered, with burning cheeks, when Abrego y Mochales would come. Her sentimental interest in him had waned a trifle during the past busy weeks; but, in spite of that, he was the great romantic attachment of her life. If he had returned her love no whispered scheme would have been too mad. What would he think of her now? But she knew instinctively that there would be no change in Mochales' attitude. He was in love with Gheta; blind to the rest of the world.

She sat lost in a daydream—how different her life would have been, married to the bull-fighter! She would have become a part of the fierce Spanish crowds at the ring, travelled to South America, seen the people heap roses, jewels, upon her idol.

Cesare Orsi stood in the doorway, smiling with oppressive good nature.

"Lavinia," he told her, "I've done something, and now I'm in the devil of a doubt." He advanced, holding a small package, and sat on the edge of a chair, mopping his brow. "You see," he began, diffidently, "that is, as you must know, at first—you were at the convent—I thought something of proposing for your sister. Thank God," he added, vigorously, "I waited! Well, I didn't; although, to be completely honest, I knew that it came to be expected. I could see the surprise in your father's face. It occurred to me afterward that if I had brought Gheta any embarrassment I'd like to do something in a small way, a sort of acknowledgment. And to-day I saw this," he held out the package; "it was pretty and I bought it for her at once. But now, when the moment arrives, I hesitate to give it to her. Gheta has grown so—so formal that I'm afraid of her," he laughed.

Lavinia unwrapped the paper covering from a green morocco box, and, releasing the catch, saw a shimmering string of delicately pink pearls.

"Cesare!" she exclaimed. "How gorgeous!" She lifted the necklace, letting it slide cool and fine through her fingers. "It's too good of you. This has cost hundreds and hundreds. I'll keep it myself."

He laughed, shaking all over; then fell serious.

"Everything I have—all, all—is yours," he assured her. Lavinia turned away with an uncomfortable feeling of falseness "What do you predict—will Gheta take it, understand, or will she play the frozen princess?"

"If I know Gheta, she'll take it," Lavinia promptly replied.

Orsi presented Gheta Sanviano with the necklace at dinner. She took it slowly from its box and glanced at the diamond clasp.

"Thank you, Cesare, immensely! What a shame that pink pearls so closely resemble coral! No one gives you credit for them."

A feeling of shame for her sister's ungraciousness possessed Lavinia and mounted to angry resentment She had no particular desire to champion Cesare, but the simplicity and kindness of his thought demanded more than a superficial admission. At the same time she had no intention of permitting Gheta any display of superiority here.

"You need only say they were from Cesare," she observed, coldly; "with him, it is always pearls."

Such a tide of pleasure swept over her husband's countenance that Lavinia bit her lip in annoyance. She had intended only to rebuke Gheta and had not calculated the effect of her speech upon Cesare. She was scrupulously careful not to mislead the latter with regard to her feeling for him. She went to a rather needless extreme to demonstrate that she conducted herself from a sense of duty and propriety alone.

Her married life, she assured herself, already resembled the Mantegazzas', whose

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indifferent courtesy she had marked and wondered at. Perhaps in time, like them, she would grow accustomed to it; but now it took all her determination to maintain the smallest daily amenities. It was not that her actual condition was unbearable, but only that it was so tragically removed from what she had imagined; she had dreamed of romance, it had been embodied for her eager gaze—and she had married Cesare Orsi!

Gheta returned the necklace to its box and the dinner progressed in silence. The coffee was on when the elder sister said:—

"I had a card from the Grand Hotel a while ago; Abrego y Mochales is there."

"And there," Orsi put in, promptly, "I hope he'll stay, or sail for Spain. I don't want the clown about here."

Gheta turned.

"But you will regret that," she addressed Lavinia; "you always found him so fascinating."

Lavinia's husband cleared his throat sharply; he was clearly impatiently annoyed.

"What foolishness!" he cried. "From the first, Lavinia has been scarcely conscious of his existence."

Lavinia avoided her sister's mocking gaze, disturbed and angry.

"Certainly Signor Mochales must be asked here," she declared.

"I suppose it can't be avoided," Orsi muttered.

It was arranged that the Spaniard should dine with them on the following evening, and Lavinia spent the intervening time in exploring her emotions. She recognized now that Gheta hated both Cesare and herself, and that she would miss no opportunity to force an awkward or even dangerously-unpleasant situation upon them. Gheta had sharpened in being as well as in countenance to such a degree that Lavinia lost what natural affection for her sister she had retained.

This, in a way, allied her with Cesare. She was now able at least to survey him in a detached manner, with an impersonal comprehension of his good qualities and æsthetic shortcomings; and in pointing out to Gheta the lavish beauty of her—Lavinia's—surroundings, she engendered in herself a slight proprietary pride. She met Abrego y Mochales at the basin with a direct bright smile, standing firmly upon her wall.

Against the blue water shadowed by the promise of dusk he was a sombre and splendid figure. Her heart undeniably beat faster and she was vexed when he turned immediately to Gheta. His greeting was intensely serious, his gaze so hungry that Lavinia looked away. It was vulgar, she told herself. Cesare met them above and greeted Mochales with a superficial heartiness. It was difficult for Cesare Orsi to conceal his opinions and feelings. The other man's gravity was superb.

At dinner conversation languished. Gheta, in a very low dress, had a bright red scarf about her shoulders, and was painted. This was so unusual that it had almost the effect of a disguise; her eyes were staring and brilliant, her fingers constantly fidgeting and creasing her napkin. Afterwards she walked with Mochales to the corner of the belvedere, where they had all been sitting, and from there drifted the low continuous murmur of her voice, briefly punctuated by a deep masculine note of interrogation. Below, the water was invisible in the wrap of night. Naples shone like a pale gold net drawn about the sweep of its hills. A glow like a thumb-print hung over Vesuvius; the hidden column of smoke smudged the stars.

Lavinia grew restless and descended to her room, where she procured a fan. Returning, she was partly startled by a pale still figure in the gloom of a passage. She saw that it was Gheta, and spoke; but the other moved away without reply and quickly vanished. Above, Lavinia halted at the strange spectacle—clearly drawn against the luminous depths of space—of Mochales and her husband rigidly facing each other.

"I must admit," Orsi said, in an exasperated voice, "that I don't understand."

Lavinia saw that he was holding something in a half-extended hand. Moving closer, she identified the object as the necklace he had given Gheta.

"What is it that you don't understand, Cesare?" she asked.

"Some infernal joke or foolishness!"

"It is no joke, signor," Mochales responded; "and it is better, perhaps, for your wife to leave us."

Orsi turned to Lavinia.

"He gives me back this necklace of Gheta's," he explained; "he says that he has every right. It appears that Gheta is going to marry him, and he already objects to presents from her brother-in-law."

"But what stuff!" Lavinia pronounced.

A swift surprise overtook her at Cesare's announcement—Gheta and Mochales to marry! She was certain that the arrangement had not existed that morning. A fleet inchoate sorrow numbed her heart and fled.

"Orsi has been only truthful enough to suit his own purpose," Mochales stated. "Signora, please——" He indicated the descent from the belvedere.

She moved to him, smiling appealingly.

"What is it all about?" she queried.

"Forgive me; it is impossible to answer."

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"A DARK TIDE OF PASSION, VISIBLE EVEN IN THE NIGHT, FLOODED ORSI'S COUNTENANCE. 'LEAVE!' HE INSISTED, 'OR I'LL HAVE YOU FLUNG INTO THE BAY.'"

"Cesare?" She addressed her husband.

"Why, this—this donkey hints that there was something improper in my present. It seems that I have been annoying Gheta by my attentions, flattering her with pearls."

"Did Gheta tell you that?" Lavinia demanded. A growing resentment took possession of her. "Because if she did, she lied!"

"Ah!" Mochales whispered, sharply.

"They're both mad," Orsi told her, "and should be dipped in the bay."

Never had Abrego y Mochales appeared handsomer; never more like fine bronze. That latter fact struck her forcibly. His face was no more mutable than a mask of metal. Its stark rigidity sent a cold tremor to her heart.

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"And," she went on, impetuously, "since Gheta said that, I'll tell you really about this necklace: Cesare gave it to her because he was sorry for her; because he thought that perhaps he had misled her. He spoke of it to me first."

"No, signora," the Spaniard responded, deliberately; "it is not your sister who lies."

Cesare Orsi exclaimed angrily. He took a hasty step; but Lavinia, quicker, moved between the two men.

"This is impossible," she declared, "and must stop immediately! It is childish!"

There was now a metallic ring in Mochales' voice that disturbed her even more than his words. The bull-fighter, completely immobile, seemed a little inhuman; he was without a visible stir of emotion, but Orsi looked more puzzled and angry every moment.

"This," he ejaculated, "in my own house—infamous!"

"Signor Mochales," Lavinia reiterated, "what I have told you is absolutely so."

"Your sister, signora, has said something different. She did not want to tell me, but I persisted—I saw that something was wrong—and forced it from her."

"Enough!" Orsi commanded. "One can see plainly that you have been duped; some things may be overlooked. . . . You have talked enough."

Mochales moved easily forward.

"You fat fool!" he said, in a low, even voice. "Do you talk to me—Abrego y Mochales?"

A dark tide of passion, visible even in the night, flooded Orsi's countenance.

"Leave!" he insisted. "Or I'll have you flung into the bay."

A deep silence followed, in which Lavinia could hear the stir of the water against the walls below. A sharp fear entered her heart, a new dread of the Spaniard. He was completely outside the circle of impulses which she understood and to which she reacted. He was not a part of her world; he coldly menaced the foundations of all right and security. Her worship of romance died miserably. In a way she thought she was responsible for the present horrible situation; it was the result of the feeling she had had for Mochales. Lavinia was certain that if Gheta had not known of it the Spaniard would have been quickly dropped by the elder. She was suddenly conscious of the perfume he always bore that, curiously, lent him a strange additional oppression.

"Mochales," he said, in a species of strained wonderment, "threatened—thrown into the bay! Mochales—the Flower of Spain! And by a helpless mound of fat——"

"Cesare!" Lavinia cried, in an energy of desperation. "Come! Don't listen to him."

Orsi released her grasp.

"I believe you are at the Grand Hotel?" He addressed the other man.

"Until I hear from you."

"To-morrow——"

All the heat had apparently evaporated from their words; they spoke with a perfunctory politeness. Cesare Orsi said:—

"I will order the launch."

In a few minutes the palpitations of the steam died in the direction of Naples.

VII.

LAVINIA followed her husband to their rooms, where he sat smoking one of his long black cigars. He was pale; his brow was wet and his collar wilted. She stood beside him and he patted her arm.

"Everything is in order," he assured her.

A species of blundering tenderness for him possessed her; an unexpected throb of her being startled and robbed her of words. He mistook her continued silence.

"All I have is yours," he explained; "it is your right. I can see now that—that my money was all I had to offer you. The only thing of value I possess. I should have realized that a girl, charming like yourself, couldn't care for a mound of fat."

Her tenderness rose till it choked in her throat, blurred what she had to say.

"Cesare," she told him, "Gheta was right; at one time I was in love with Mochales." He turned with a startled exclamation; but she silenced him. "He was, it seemed, all that a girl might admire—dark and mysterious and handsome. He was romantic. I demanded nothing else then; now something has happened that I don't altogether understand, but it has changed everything for me. Cesare, your money never made any difference in my feeling for you—it didn't before and it doesn't to-night——" She hesitated and blushed painfully, awkwardly.

The cigar fell from his hand and he rose eagerly, facing her.

"Lavinia," he asked, "is it possible—do you mean that you care the least about me?"

"It must be that, Cesare, because I am so terribly afraid."

Later he admitted, ruefully:—

"But no man should resemble, as I do, a great oyster. I shall pay very dearly for my laziness."

"You are not going to fight Mochales!" she protested. "It would be insanity."

"Insanity," he agreed, promptly. "Yet I can't permit myself to be the target for vile tongues."

Lavinia abruptly left him and hurried to

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her sister's room. The door was locked; she knocked, but got no response.

"Gheta!" she called, low and urgently, "open at once! Your plans have gone dreadfully wrong. Gheta!" she said more sharply into the answering silence. "Cesare has had a terrific argument with Mochales, and worse may follow. Open!" There was still no answer, and suddenly she beat upon the door with her fists. "Liar!" she cried thinly through the wood. "Liar! I'll make you eat that necklace, pearl for pearl, sorrow for sorrow!"

A feeling of impotence overwhelmed her at the implacable stillness that succeeded her hysterical outburst. She stood with a pounding heart and clasped straining fingers.

Abrego y Mochales could kill Cesare without the slightest shadow of a question. There was, she recognized, something essentially feminine in the saturnine bull-fighter; his pride had been severely assaulted; and therefore he would be—in his own, less subtle manner—as dangerous as Gheta. Cesare's self-esteem, too, had been wounded in its most vulnerable place—he had been insulted before her. But, even if the latter refused to proceed, Mochales, she knew, would force an acute conclusion. There was nothing to be got from her sister, and she slowly returned to her chamber, from which she could hear Orsi's heavy footfalls.

She mechanically removed the square emerald that hung from a platinum thread about her neck, took off her rings, and proceeded to the small iron safe where valuables were kept. As she swung open the door a sheet of paper slipped forward from an upper compartment. It bore a printed address—in the Strada San Lucia. She saw that it was the blackmailing letter Cesare had received from the Neapolitan secret society, demanding two thousand lire. She recalled what he had said at the time—if she had an enemy her gown could be spoiled in the foyer of the opera; a man ruined at his club. Even murders were ascribed to it.

She held the letter, gazing fixedly at the address, mentally repeating again and again the significance of its contents. She thought of showing it to Cesare, suggesting—— But she realized that, bound by a conventional honour, he would absolutely refuse to listen to her.

Almost subconsciously she folded the sheet and hid it in her dress. Kneeling before the safe she procured a long red envelope. It contained the sum of money her father had given her at the wedding. It was her *dot*—a comparatively small amount, he had said at the time with an apologetic smile; but it was absolutely, unquestionably her own. This, when she locked the safe, remained outside.

When she had hidden the letter and envelope in her dressing-table Cesare stood in the doorway. He was still pale, but composed, and held himself with simple dignity.

"Some men," he said, "are not so happy, even for an hour."

A sudden passionate necessity to save him swept over her.

In the morning Orsi remained at the villa, but he sent the launch in early with an urgent summons for the Cavaliere Nelli. Later, when he asked for Lavinia, he was told that she had gone to Naples; and when the boat returned, Nelli—a military figure, with hair and moustache like yellowish white silk—assisted her to the wall. She was closely veiled against the sparkling flood of light and bay, and hurried directly to her room.

There she knelt on a praying-chair before a small alcoved altar with tall wax tapers, and remained a long while. She was disturbed by a sudden ringing report below; it was Cesare practising with a duelling pistol. Lavinia remembered, from laughing comments in Florence, that her husband was an atrocious shot. The sound was repeated at irregular intervals through an unbearably long morning.

Gheta, she learned, had refused the morning chocolate and, with her maid, had collected and packed all her effects. Lavinia had no desire to see her. The situation now was past Gheta's mending.

After luncheon Lavinia remained in her room; Nelli departed for Naples and Cesare joined her. It was evident that he was greatly disturbed; but he spoke to her evenly. He was possessed by an impotent rage at his unwieldy body and clumsy hand. This alternated with an evident wonderment at the position in which he found himself and a great tenderness for Lavinia.

At dusk they were in Lavinia's room, waiting for a message from Naples. Lavinia was leaning across the marble ledge of her window, gazing over the dim blue sweep of water to the distant flowering lights. She heard sudden footsteps and, half turning, saw her husband tearing open an envelope.

"Lavinia!" he cried. "There has been an accident in the lift of the Grand Hotel, and Mochales—is dead!" She hung upon the ledge now for support. "The attendant, a new man, started the lift too soon and caught Mochales——" She sank down upon her knees in an attitude of prayer, and Cesare Orsi stood reverently bowed.

"The will of God!" he muttered.

A long slow shiver passed over Lavinia, and he bent and lifted her in his arms.

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Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles and Problems.

SIMON IN PUZZLELAND.

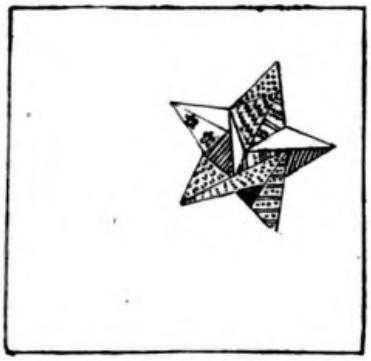
JACK AND JILL.

It must have been $6\frac{2}{3}$ miles to the top of the hill. They would thus go up in 4 hours and come down in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

MIKE'S AGE.

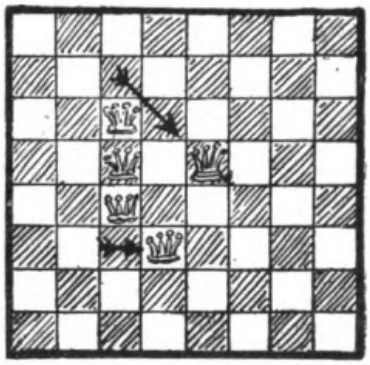
Mike's present age is $10\frac{6}{21}$ years, Pat's is $29\frac{15}{21}$ years, and Biddy's is $24\frac{20}{21}$ years. When the sty was built ($7\frac{0}{21}$ years ago) Mike was $3\frac{7}{21}$, Pat was $22\frac{6}{21}$, and Biddy was $17\frac{14}{21}$. In $11\frac{1}{21}$ years Mike will be $22\frac{6}{21}$ (as old as Pat when he built the sty), Pat will be $41\frac{5}{21}$, and Biddy will be $36\frac{19}{21}$, making 100 years together.

THE LOST STAR.



The ill ustration shows the star in exact position

THE FIVE QUEENS.

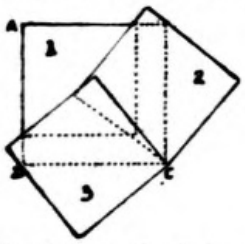


The arrows indicate the moves of the two queens. The Black king cannot now be placed anywhere on the board without his being "checkmated."

ODDS AND EVENS.

$9+7+5+3+1=25$ and $\frac{49}{4}+8+2=25$.
$37+5+9-1=50$ and $46+0+\frac{8}{2}=50$.

THE THREE TABLE-CLOTHS.



The three table-cloths, each 4ft. by 4ft., will cover a table 5ft. 1in. by 5ft. 1in., if laid in the manner shown. A, B, C, D is the table-top and 1, 2, and 3 are the three square cloths. Of course, portions of the cloths 2 and 3 will fall over the edge of the table.

CHESS CURIOSITIES.

THE TWO-MOVER.

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.
1. P to K 4, ch	1. K takes P.	2. R to K 2, dis. mate
	1. K to B 4	2. Q takes P, mate.
	1. K to B 5	2. Q to Kt 4, mate
	1. K other	2. P takes R, becoming a Q or Kt accordingly, mate.

THE THREE-MOVER.

1. Q to Kt 8; 1. P to Q 4 (*a*). 2. K to Q 2; 2. Any. 3. Q mates accordingly. (*a*) 1. K to B file (*b*). 2. R takes P; 2. Any. 3. Q to Kt 4, mate. (*b*) 1. Other. 2. Q takes P; 2. Any. 3. Mates accordingly.

HIDDEN FURNITURE.

The nineteen articles of furniture are :—

Chair, table, sofa, carpet, mat, stool, settee, what-not, sideboard, fender, rug, clock, bedstead, desk, secretaire, Chesterfield, hatstand, piano, tea-table.

£250 for a Short Story.

For full particulars see back of frontispiece.

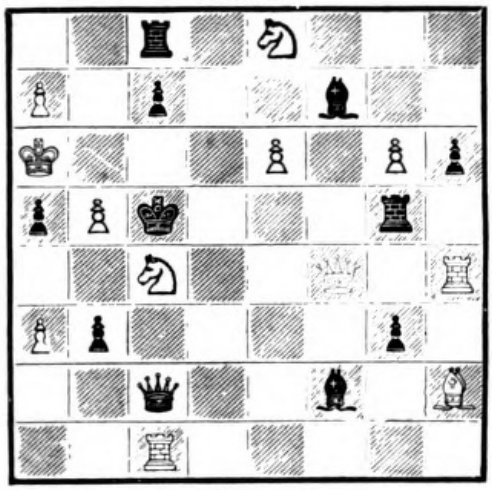
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CHESS CURIOSITIES.

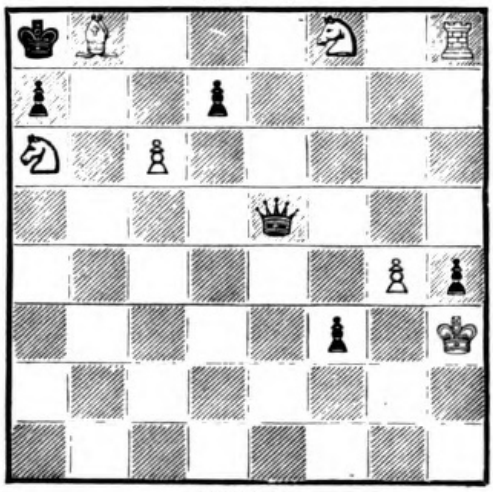
By T. B. ROWLAND.

BLACK.—11.



WHITE.—12.

BLACK.—6.



WHITE.—7.

In each White is to play and mate in two moves.

IN the first problem there are eighteen mates, twelve of which are given by the White queen; this is the greatest number of mates the queen can give moving from the one square. In addition the White queen has command of eighteen squares. In the second problem the Black queen has command of twenty-seven squares: this is the greatest number it can command at the one time. In these respects the problems are uncommon and are good companions to the two given in our last number.

(Solutions next month.)



A UNIQUE PET.

A TAME HUMMING-BIRD.

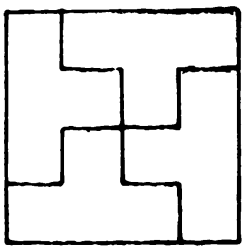
ALTHOUGH man has made friends with specimens of the great majority of the inhabitants of the bird and animal kingdom, probably this is the only instance on record of a trained humming-bird. Sergeant Charles Haberkorn and Orderly M. J. Maw, of the National Home for Disabled Soldiers at Sawtelle, California, are its owners, and they are justifiably proud of their unusual pet. This domesticated humming-bird has its home in an orange tree, but when meal-times come round it seeks out one of its masters and eats from a medicine-dropper filled with sugar-syrup, as shown in the accompanying photograph. It is a wonderful instance of what can be achieved by patience, and should act as an inducement and encouragement to others who make a hobby of the collecting and training of unique pets.

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PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

485.—A NEW GREEK CROSS PUZZLE.



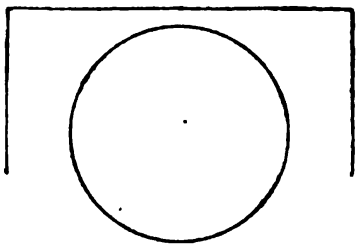
HERE is a little puzzle for our more juvenile readers. It ought to be quite easy. Cut square into four pieces in the manner shown and then put these four pieces together so as to form a symmetrical Greek Cross.

486.—GENEROUS DOLES.

A GENEROUS man set aside a certain sum of money for equal distribution weekly to the needy of his acquaintance. One day he remarked, "If there are five fewer applicants next week, you will each receive two shillings more." Unfortunately, instead of there being fewer there were actually four more persons applying for the dole. "This means," he pointed out, "that you will each receive one shilling less." Now, how much did each person receive at that last distribution?

487.—SQUARING THE CIRCLE.

EVERYBODY to-day knows that the problem of squaring the circle depends on finding the ratio of the diameter to the circumference. This cannot be found in numbers with exactitude, but we can get it near enough for all practical purposes. Thus, ordinarily we find that the ratio 1 to 3¼ is sufficiently close. If we want it a trifle more exact, we take 113 to 355; and so on. We all have these rough approximations at our fingers' ends for practical use.



But it is equally impossible by Euclidean geometry to draw a straight line equal to the circumference of a given circle. You can roll a penny carefully on its edge along a straight line on a sheet of paper and get a pretty exact result, but such a thing as a circular garden bed cannot be so rolled. Now, the line above, when straightened out (it is bent for convenience in printing), is very nearly the exact length of the circumference of the accompanying circle. The horizontal part of the line is half the circumference. Could you have found it by a simple method, using only pencil, compasses, and ruler? It is surprising how few people are acquainted with any rough and ready method of attacking this little problem.

488.—A MUTILATED ANAGRAM.

I WAS given the following anagram: A B C D E F * * I *. The three letters indicated by asterisks were illegible, so I substituted for them any letters I chose and then so arranged the ten letters as to form a well-known English word. I did this in two ways, one of which proved to be correct. What were the two words?

489.—MISSING WORDS.

THE following ingenious example was sent to me by Mr. G. S. Wright:—

Watching his ..... play on the sand,
Father ..... a weary sigh.
He screws the ..... up in his hand,
And tries to ..... a passing fly.
"..... she bids to mind the kids,"
He growls. "Such ..... aren't for me.
I'll fly next year to far Cashmere:
No peace ..... with by the sea.
So shall ..... this tide of care,
And cease to ..... down and swear."

The blanks can be filled in with one word or two, the same five letters being used in every case.

"UNSOLVED" ENIGMAS.

THE enigma (No. 472), generally ascribed to Hallam, the historian, but also credited to various bishops and others, has brought me many letters, but for the most part the suggested solutions are quite unacceptable. It seems that the answer was given some years ago in the *Morning Post* as H A M, the fortress on a rock on the Somme where Louis Napoleon sat imprisoned for some six years, planning to escape and trying to raise the wind. When he became emperor, kings paid court to him. Ham was known to but few, but often passed by ships. The land of Ham was hated by the Gentile; the Jew hates ham as pig. Ham slept with Noah in the Ark. The isle is perhaps a mile long. The letters H.M. stand for Her Majesty Queen Victoria. But this will not do. It would be Ham sits on a rock when Ham is raising the wind, not Napoleon. To give the approximate weight of a pig's ham as 3lb. is absurd. And the "one night" is not explained.

A correspondent confidently sends the answer, CHURCH. He says the enigma appeared in the *Times* about eighty years ago, and that the versical answer which he sends "usually appears alongside the question." I cannot give it in full, but for "my weight is three pounds" we are referred to Zechariah xi. 12, and for "my length is a mile" to Ezekiel xlii. 20. You are asked to believe that "my first and my last are the pride of this isle" refers to "Christ Church," Oxford. Hallam was a Christ Church man.

The word RAVEN has been suggested to me by E. D. and others, and I find that this answer was given some years ago in print. The raven croaks before a storm, it was once an object of worship and is seldom seen. It was forbidden the Jew as food (see Leviticus xi. 15). It was alone with Noah in the Ark when its mate was sent forth. It weighs about three pounds, and it is the name of a small South Carolina island—presumably a mile long. "My first and my last," R.N. (the Royal Navy), are certainly "the pride of this isle." Readers can now take their choice. I think the large majority will favour RAVEN.

A few correspondents have declined to accept my guess of GOOD-NIGHT as the solution to No. 468, wrongly attributed to Sir Walter Scott. One of these is amusingly contemptuous and abusive, but, of course, he writes anonymously. It now turns out that the enigma is by W. Mackworth Praed; is printed in his collected works, and the author's own answer is—GOOD-NIGHT!

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ANSWERS TO THE HARDEST BRIDGE PROBLEMS.

By R. F. FOSTER.

Six bridge problems, each by a different composer, were published in last month's number of "The Strand Magazine." Here are the solutions:—

No. 1.—Six Cards.—By R. C. Mankowski.

Hand.	*Hearts.*	*Clubs.*	*Diamonds.*	*Spades.*
A	8 7	None	None	J 10 6 4
Y	6	J 10 7 5 4	None	None
B	None	8 6 3	J 6	7
Z	10	None	8 3	Q 8 5

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win four tricks.

Z leads diamond 8, A trumps and leads a trump. If B discards a club, Z leads the spade queen, and then puts B in with a diamond. If B discards a diamond, Z leads the spade five, and if A passes it, B is in the lead. If A covers, Z holds the tenace. If B discards a spade, Z leads the diamond and Y makes three tricks in clubs.

If A leads a small spade at the second trick, instead of the trump, Z wins; but if A leads a high spade, Y trumps it. If A refuses to trump the first trick, Y trumps it, and leads the knave of clubs. (Note that if Z begins with the smaller diamond, A trumps it and B throws away the knave, discarding the spade on the trump lead. This defeats the solution.)

No. 2.—Seven Cards.—By Alex. Porges.

Hand.	*Hearts.*	*Clubs.*	*Diamonds.*	*Spades.*
A	J	7 6	10	K 7 4
Y	K 3	5 4 3	None	8 2
B	9	J 8	K 8 5	6
Z	None	K 10	Q 6 3	A 5

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win six tricks.

Z starts with a small diamond, which Y trumps and leads the high trump, upon which Z discards the ace of spades. Y then leads a club and Z makes two tricks in that suit. Z's next lead is the losing spade, and no matter how A plays, Y must get in with the eight of spades to make the established club trick.

No. 3.—Eight Cards.—By Prof. T. J. Wertenbaker.

Hand.	*Hearts.*	*Clubs.*	*Diamonds.*	*Spades.*
A	None	Q J 7 6 4 3		8 4
Y	4	A 5 3 2	K 5 4	None
B	None	9 8	J 10 9	K 10 5
Z	2	10	Q 8 6	9 3 2

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win six tricks.

Z leads the spade nine, on which Y discards a small club. B wins with the ten. If B returns the spade five, Y trumps and leads a small diamond. Z wins this and leads the club. A covers with the knave, and Y ducks. Now if A leads a small club, Y plays the ace and Z discards a diamond.

Y can now lead a small club, which Z trumps, and by this time B has been forced to unguard the diamonds or to throw away the top spade.

If B leads a diamond for the second trick, Z puts on the queen and leads a small spade for Y to trump. Y then places the lead with A with a small club, bringing about the same situation as above. Y makes two diamonds, or Z makes a spade trick, according to B's discard.

No. 4.—Seven Cards.—By R. C. Lasher.

Hand.	*Hearts.*	*Clubs.*	*Diamonds.*	*Spades.*
A	7 5	K	A 9	J 10
Y	9 4 2	A 4	None	K 5
B	6	Q J	K 6	Q 6
Z	8	8 7	Q 10 3	A

Hearts trump. Z to lead. Y and Z to win all seven.

Z leads a small diamond and Y trumps it. Y leads the spade five, which Z wins and leads another diamond, which Y trumps. Now when Y leads the spade king, Z discards a club, so that Y may lead the ace of clubs and follow with the four, which Z trumps, and A is obliged to under-trump. Y's nine of trumps is now good for the last trick.

No. 5.—Eight Cards.—By H. Boardman.

Hand.	*Hearts.*	*Clubs.*	*Diamonds.*	*Spades.*
A	7	K 7 5	K 10 2	5
Y	8	Q 3 2	A 9 7 6	None
B	3	J 4	J 8 5	9 8
Z	9 4	8 6	Q 4 3	6

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win five tricks.

There are a great many possible variations in the solution to this problem, but the main play will give the key to the situation. Z leads the spade, on which Y discards a small diamond. If B leads a small diamond, Z ducks, A plays the ten, and Y lets it take the trick.

Now A's best defence is to lead the trump, which Z wins with the nine, returning the four of trumps. The discards by A and B solve the problem. No other opening but the spade will solve, but the defence can try a number of experiments, none of which will avail, however.

No. 6.—Seven Cards.—By S. C. Kinsey.

Hand.	*Hearts.*	*Clubs.*	*Diamonds.*	*Spades.*
A	A 4	K 10 6	8 6	None
Y	J 9 3	3 2	None	K 10
B	10 7 5	J	None	9 8 5
Z	K Q 8	A Q	K	J

Hearts trumps. Z to lead. Y and Z to win six tricks.

Z starts with a high trump, on which Y plays the nine, no matter what A does. If A passes up the trick, Z leads the knave of spades. If A refuses to trump, Y wins with the king and leads the ten, upon which Z discards the queen of clubs.

If A still refuses to trump, Y leads the club, which Z wins, and leads a diamond. If A still has a diamond, Y shuts out B's trumps with the knave.

If A wins the first trick and leads a diamond, Y trumps with the jack and leads the three of trumps through B. After the trumps are gone, Y wins a spade trick, and gives Z a club discard on the second round of spades. If A refuses to win the first trick, but wins the second, and then leads a diamond, Y trumps with the jack and leads the king of spades, giving Z the club discard, and then leads the three of trumps. The same situation is brought about if A trumps the third trick.

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"'WHAT DO I WANT?' HE ANSWERED. 'WHY, YOU, MY DARLING LITTLE GIRL.' ENGROSSED IN HIS DESIRE HE FAILED TO NOTICE HUGH, WHO WAS WATCHING THE SCENE."

(See page 113.)

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"An Arrow at a Venture."

By "SAPPER" (H.C. McNEILE)
ILLUSTRATED BY CHRISTOPHER CLARK, R.I

I.

FOR the twentieth time the Man went through the whole wretched business again, in his mind. To the casual diner at the Milan, he was just an ordinary well-groomed Englishman, feeding by himself, and if he ate a little wearily, and there was a gleam of something more than sadness in the deepset eyes, it was not sufficiently noticeable to attract attention.

"Monsieur finds everything to his satisfaction?" The head waiter paused by the table, and the Man glanced up at him. A smile flickered round his mouth as the irony of the question struck home, and, almost unconsciously, his hand touched the letter in his coat pocket.

"Everything, thank you," he answered, gravely. "Everything, François, except the whole infernal universe."

The head waiter shook his head sympathetically.

"I regret, Monsieur Lethbridge, that our kitchen is not large enough to keep that on the bill of fare."

"Otherwise you'd cook it to a turn and make even it palatable," said Lethbridge, bitterly. "No, it's beyond you, François; and, at the moment, it looks as if it was beyond me. Tell 'em to bring me a half bottle of the same, will you?"

The head waiter picked up the empty champagne bottle, and then paused for a moment. Lethbridge was an old customer, and with François that was the same as being an old friend. For years he had come to the Milan, and, latterly, he had always brought the Girl with him, a wonderful, clear-eyed, upstanding youngster, who seemed almost too young for the narrow gold ring on her left hand. And François, who had once heard him call her his Colt, had nodded his approval and been glad. It seemed an ideal marriage, and he was nothing if not sentimental. But to-night all was not well; the Colt had been a bit tricky perhaps; the snaffle had not been quite light enough in the tender mouth. And so François paused, and the eyes of the two men met.

"The younger they are, M'sieur—the more thoroughbred—the gentler must be the touch. Otherwise——" He shrugged his shoulders, and brushed an imaginary crumb from the table.

"Yes, François," said Lethbridge, slowly, "otherwise——"

"They hurt their mouths, M'sieur; and that hurts those who love them. And sometimes it's not the youngster's fault."

The next moment he was bowing some new arrivals to a table, while Hugh Lethbridge stared thoughtfully across the crowded room to where the orchestra was preparing to give their next selection.

"Sometimes it's not the youngster's fault." He took the letter out of his pocket and read it through again, though every word of it was branded in letters of fire on his brain.

"I hope this won't give you too much

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of a shock," it began, "but I can't live with you any more."

"Too much of a shock!" Dear heavens! It had been like a great, stunning blow from which he was still dazedly trying to recover.

"Nothing seems to count with you except your business and making money." Hugh's lips twisted into a bitter smile. "You grudge me every penny I spend; and then refuse to let me have my own friends."

"Oh, Colt, Colt, how brutally untrue a half truth can be!"

"Everything has been going wrong lately, and so I think it's better to have a clean cut. There's no good you asking me to come back.—DORIS."

Once more Hugh Lethbridge stared across the room. A waiter placed the new bottle on the table, but he took no notice. His mind was busy with the past, and his untasted food grew cold on the plate in front of him.

It was in the summer of 1917 that Hugh Lethbridge, being on sick leave from France, met Doris Lashley for the first time. She was helping at the hospital where Hugh came to rest finally; and having once set eyes on her, he made no effort to hurry his departure unduly. The contrast between talking to Doris and wallowing in the mud-holes of Passchendaele was very pleasant; and in due course, assisted by one or two taxi-rides and some quiet dinners *à deux*, he proposed and was accepted. In October he married her; in November he returned to France, after a fortnight's honeymoon spent in Devonshire.

He went back to his old battalion, and stagnated with them through the winter. But the stagnation was made endurable by the wonder of the girl who was his: by the remembrance of those unforgettable days and nights when he had been alone with her in the little hotel down Dawlish way; by the glory of her letters. For she was a very human girl, even though she was just a Colt. Nineteen and a half is not a very great age, and sometimes of a night Hugh would lie awake listening to the rattle of a machine-gun down the line, and the half-forgotten religion of childhood would surge through his mind. Thirty seems old to nineteen, and dim, inarticulate prayers would rise to the great brooding Spirit above that He would never let this slip of a girl down. Then sleep would come—sleep, when a kindly Fate would sometimes let him dream of her; dreams when she would come to him out of the mists, and they would stand together again in the little sandy cove with the red cliffs towering above them. She would put her hands on his shoulders, and shake him gently to and fro until, just as he was going to kiss her, a raucous voice would bellow in his ear, "Stand to." And the Heaven of imagination would change to the Hell of grey trenches just before the dawn.

In March, 1918, Hugh wangled a fortnight's leave. And at this point it is necessary to touch for a moment on that unpleasant essential to modern life—money. The girl had brought in as her contribution to the establishment the sum of one hundred pounds a year left her by her grandmother; Hugh had about three hundred a year private means in addition to his Army pay. Before the war it had been in addition to what he was making in the City; after the war it would be the same again. And, as everyone knows, what a man may make in the City depends on a variety of circumstances, many of which are quite outside his own control. That point, however, concerns the future; and for the moment it is March, 1918—leave. Moreover, as has been said, the girl was just a Colt.

For a fortnight they lived—the Man with his eyes wide open, but not caring—at the rate of five thousand a year. They blew two hundred of the best, and loved every minute of it. Then came the German offensive, and we are not concerned with the remainder of 1918. Sufficient to say that in his wisdom—or was it his folly?—there was no addition to the family when, in February, 1919, he was demobilized, and the story proper begins.

Hugh's gratuity was just sufficient to supply the furniture for one room in the house they took near Esher. If it had been expended on lines of utility rather than those of show it would have gone farther; but the stuff was chosen by Doris one afternoon while he was at the office, and when she pointed it out to him with ill-concealed pride at the shop, he stifled his misgivings and agreed that it was charming. It was; so was the price. For the remainder of the furniture he dipped into his capital, at a time when he wanted every available penny he could lay his hands on for his business. He never spoke to Doris about money; there were so many other things to discuss as the evenings lengthened and spring changed to early summer. They were intensely personal things, monotonous to a degree to any Philistine outsider who might have been privileged to hear them. But since they seemed to afford infinite satisfaction to the two principal performers, the feelings of a Philistine need not be considered.

And then one evening a whole variety of little things happened together. To start with, Hugh had spent the afternoon going more carefully than usual into books and ledgers, and when he had finished he lit a cigarette and stared a trifle blankly at the wall opposite. There was no doubt about it, business

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was rotten. Stuff which he had been promised, and for which heavy deposits had been paid, was not forthcoming. It was no fault of the firms he was dealing with; he knew that their letters of regret were real statements of fact. War-weariness, labour unrest, a hundred other almost indefinable causes were at work, and the stuff simply wasn't there to deliver. If he liked, as they had failed in their contract, he could have his deposit back, etc., etc. So ran half-a-dozen letters, and Hugh turned them over on his desk a little bitterly. It was no good to him having his deposit back; it was no good to him living on his capital. And there was no use mincing matters: as things stood he was making practically no income out of his work. It would adjust itself in time—that he knew. The difficulty was the immediate present and the next few months. What a pity it was he couldn't do as he would have done in the past—take rooms and live really quietly till things adjusted themselves. And then, with a start, he realized why he couldn't, and with a quick tightening of his jaw he rose and reached for his hat. She must never know—God bless her. Hang it, things would come right soon.

He bought an evening paper on his way down, and glanced over it mechanically.

"If," had written some brilliant contributor, "the nation at large, and individuals in particular, will not realize, and that right soon, that any business or country whose expenditure exceeds its income must inevitably be ruined sooner or later——"

Hugh got no farther. He crushed the paper into a ball and flung it out of the window, muttering viciously under his breath.

"Backed a stiff 'un?" said his neighbour, sympathetically. "I've had five in succession."

He walked from the station a little quicker than usual. There was nothing for it but drastic economy; and as for any idea of the little car Doris was so keen on, it simply couldn't be done. Anyway, as the agent had told him over the 'phone that morning, there was no chance of delivery for at least six months. Had advised getting a second-hand one if urgently needed—except that, of course, at the present moment they were more expensive than new ones. But still one could get one at once—in fact, he had one. Only three-fifty.

Hugh hung up his hat in the hall and stepped into the drawing-room. He could see Doris outside working in the garden, but for a moment or two he made no movement to join her. His eyes were fixed on the huge, luxurious ottoman, covered with wonderful fat cushions. It was undoubtedly the most comfortable thing he had ever sat on: it was made to be sat on, and nightly it was sat on—by both of them. It was the recipient of those intensely personal things so monotonous to the Philistine; and it had cost, with cushions and trappings complete, one hundred and twenty Bradburys.

He was still looking at it thoughtfully when the girl came in through the open window.

"I want a great big kiss, ever so quick, please," she announced, going up to him. "One more. Thank you!"

With his hands on her shoulders he held her away from him, and she smiled up into his eyes.

"I very nearly came and looked you up in your grubby old office to-day," she said, putting his tie straight. "And then I knew that I'd get on a bus going the wrong way, and I hadn't enough money for a taxi. I'd spent it all on a treat for you."

Almost abruptly his arms dropped to his sides.

"I didn't know you were coming up, darling," he said, pulling out his cigarette case.

"Nor did I till just before I went," she answered. "Don't you want to know what the treat is?"

Without waiting for him to speak, she went on, prodding one of his waistcoat buttons gently with a little pink finger, at each word.

"I bought two whopping fat peaches—one for you and one for me. They were awful expensive—seven shillings and sixpence each. And after dinner we'll eat them and make a dreffful mess."

Now, I am fully aware that any and every male reader who may chance to arrive at this point will think that under similar circumstances he would argue thus: "The peaches were bought. After all, they were a little thing—fifteen shillings is not a fortune. Therefore, undoubtedly the thing to do was to take her in his arms, make much of her, and remark, 'You extravagant little bean—you'll break the firm if you go on like this. But I love you very much, and after we've made a dreffful mess I'm going to talk to you dreffful seriously,' or words to that effect."

My friendly male, you're quite correct. You appreciate the value of little things; you see how vastly more important they are than a stagnating business or any stupid fears as to what may happen to the being you love most in the world if——

Unfortunately, Hugh was not so wise in his time as you. That little thing seemed to be so big—it's a way of little things. It seemed bigger than the business and the motor-car and the ottoman all combined.

"My dear old thing," he said—not angrily, but just a little wearily—"have you *no* sense of the value of money?"

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Then he turned and went to his own room, without looking back. And so he didn't see the look on the girl's face: the look of a child that has been spoken to sharply and doesn't understand—the look of a dog that has been beaten by the master it adores. If he had seen it there was still time—but he didn't. And when he came back five minutes later, remorseful and furious with himself, the girl was not there. She was upstairs, staring a little miserably out of the bedroom window.

And that had been the beginning of it. Sitting there in the restaurant, Hugh traced everything back to that. Of course, there had been other things too. He saw them now clearly: a whole host of little stupid points which he had hardly thought of at the time. Business had not improved until—the irony of it—that very day, when a big deal had gone through successfully, and he had realized that the turning-point had come. He had hurried home to tell her, and had found—the letter.



"I BOUGHT TWO WHOPPING FAT PEACHES—ONE FOR YOU AND ONE FOR ME. THEY WERE AWFUL EXPENSIVE—SEVEN SHILLINGS AND SIXPENCE EACH."

Mechanically he lit a cigarette, and once again his thoughts went back over the last few months. That wretched evening when she gave him a heavy bill from her dressmaker, with a polite intimation at the bottom that something on account by return would oblige. He had had a particularly bad day; but she was his Colt, and there was no good being angry about it.

"They hurt their mouths, M'sieur." He ground out his cigarette savagely. "Handle them gently." And he had told her, when she mentioned her hundred a year, that she had already spent two in four months. It was true, but—what the devil had that got to do with it?

And then John Massingham. Hugh's jaw set as he thought of that row. There he had been right—absolutely right. Massingham was a man whose reputation was notorious. He specialized in young married women, and he was a very successful specialist. He was one of those men with lots of money, great personal charm, and the morals of a monkey. That was exactly what Hugh had said to her before flatly forbidding her to have anything to do with him.

He recalled now the sudden uplift of her

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shoulders, the straight, level look of her eyes.

"Forbid?" she had said.

"Forbid," he had answered. "The man is an outsider of the purest water."

And he had been right—absolutely right. He took out his cigarette-case again, and even as he did so he became rigid. Coming down the steps of the restaurant was the man himself, with Doris.

For a few moments everything danced before his eyes. The blood was rushing to his head: tables, lights, the moving waiters, swam before him in a red haze. Then he shrank back behind the pillar in front and waited for them to sit down. He saw her glance towards the table at which they had usually sat—the table which he had refused to have that night; then she followed Massingham to one which had evidently been reserved for him at the other end of the restaurant. She sat down with her back towards Hugh, and by leaning forward he could just see her neck and shoulders gleaming white through the bit of flame-coloured gauze she was wearing over her frock.

His eyes rested on her companion, and for a while Hugh studied him critically and impartially. Faultlessly turned out, he was bending towards Doris with just the right amount of deferential admiration on his face. Occasionally he smiled, showing two rows of very white teeth, and as he talked he moved his hands in little gestures which were more foreign than English. They were well-shaped hands, perfectly manicured, a fact of which their owner was fully aware.

After a time Massingham ceased to do the talking. The occasional smiles showed no more; a serious look, with just a hint of slave-like devotion in it, showed on his face as he listened to Doris. Once or twice he shook his head thoughtfully; once or twice he allowed his eyes to meet hers with an expression which required no interpretation.

"My poor child," it said; "my poor little hardly-used girl. Don't you know that I love you, tenderly, devotedly? But, of course, I couldn't dream of saying so. I'm only just a friend."

It was so utterly obvious to the man behind the pillar, that for a while he watched them with the same disinterested feeling that he would have watched a play.

"She's telling him what a rotten life she's had," he reflected, cynically. "Her husband doesn't understand her. Massingham answers the obvious cue with a soulful look. If only he had been the husband in question, there would have been no misunderstanding. Perhaps not. Only a broken heart, my Colt, that's all."

He looked up as François stopped in front of his table.

"She doesn't know I'm here, does she?" asked Hugh, quietly.

"No, M'sieur." The head waiter glanced a little sadly at the two heads so close together.

Hugh took a piece of paper from his pocket, and scribbled a few words on it in pencil.

"I don't want her to know—at least, not yet. Would you ask the orchestra to play that?" He handed the slip across the table. "It's important." And then, "Wait, François; I want to find out where she goes to after dinner. It's too late now for a theatre, and I expect she's staying at an hotel. Can you do that for me?"

The head waiter nodded in silence, and moved away. Very few men would have asked him to do such a thing; he would have done it for still fewer. But this was an exception, and tragedy is never far off when the Massinghams of this world dine with youngsters who have run away from their husbands.

Hugh, with an eagerness which almost suffocated him, waited for the first bars of the waltz he had asked the orchestra to play. The last time he had heard it, he had been dining at the Milan with Doris. It was their favourite waltz; on every programme they had made a point of dancing it together. Would she remember? Would it break through the wretched wall of misunderstanding, and carry her back to the days when it was just they two, and there was nothing else that mattered in the whole wide world?

The haunting melody stole gently through the room, and with his heart pounding madly, Hugh Lethbridge watched his wife. At the very first note she sat up abruptly, and with a grim triumph Hugh saw the look of sudden surprise on her companion's face. Then, very slowly, she turned and stared at their usual table. Her lips were parted, and to the man who watched so eagerly it seemed as if she were breathing a little quickly. Almost he fancied he could see a look of dawning wonder in her eyes, like a child awakening in a strange room.

Then she turned away, and sat motionless till the music sobbed into silence. And as her companion joined in the brief perfunctory applause, Hugh's glance for a moment rested on François. The head waiter was smiling gently to himself.

Five minutes later she rose, and Massingham, with a quick frown, got up with her. That acute judge of feminine nature was under no delusions as to what had happened, and behind the smiling mask of his face he cursed the orchestra individually and comprehensively. Quite obviously a girl not to be rushed; he had been congratulating himself on the progress made during dinner. In fact, he had been distinctly hopeful that the

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fruit was ripe for the plucking that very night. And now that confounded tune had wakened memories. And memories are the devil with women.

He adjusted her opera cloak, and followed her to the door. Things would have to be handled carefully in the car going back, very carefully. One false word, and the girl would shy like a wild thing. He was thankful that he had already told her quite casually that by an extraordinary coincidence he was stopping at the same hotel as she was. At the time it had seemed to make not the slightest impression on her; she had not even required the usual glib lie that his flat was being done up.

He helped her into the car and spoke to the chauffeur. And a large man in a gorgeous uniform, having given a message to a small page-boy, watched the big Daimler glide swiftly down Piccadilly.

"Madame has gone to the Magnificent,



"AT THE VERY FIRST NOTE OF THE HAUNTING MELODY SHE SAT UP ABRUPTLY. THEN, VERY SLOWLY, SHE TURNED AND STARED AT THEIR USUAL TABLE. TO THE MAN WHO WATCHED SO EAGERLY IT SEEMED AS IF SHE WERE BREATHING A LITTLE QUICKLY."

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M'sieur," were the words with which François roused Hugh from his reverie, a few minutes later.

"She remembered, François; she remembered that tune."

"Oui, M'sieur—she remembered. You must not let her forget again. Monsieur Massingham is——" He hesitated, and left his sentence unfinished.

"Mr. Massingham is a blackguard," said Hugh, grimly. "And I'm a fool. So between us she hasn't had much of a show."

He rose with a short laugh.

"Monsieur is going to the Magnificent?" François pulled back the table.

"I am, François"—shortly.

"Be easy, Monsieur. Be gentle. Don't hurt her mouth again——" He bowed as was befitting to an old customer. "Good-night, Monsieur. Will you be dining to-morrow?"

"That depends, *mon ami*. Perhaps——"

"I think you will, M'sieur. At that table——" With a smile he pointed to the usual one. "I will order your dinner myself—for two."



II.

It had not occurred to Hugh before; for some reason or other it had not even entered his mind. And then, with a sudden crushing force, the two names leaped at him from the page of the register at the Magnificent, and for the moment numbed him.

"Doris Lethbridge," and then, a dozen lines below, "John Massingham." What a fool, what a short-sighted fool, he was! Good God! did he not know Massingham's reputation? And yet, through some inexplicable freak of mind, this development had not so much as crossed his brain. And there had he been sitting at his club for over an hour, in order to ensure seeing the Colt in her room and avoid any chance of having a scene downstairs.

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Dimly he realized the clerk was speaking.

"Number seven hundred and ten, sir; and since you have no luggage, we must ask for a deposit of a pound."

"I see," said Hugh, speaking with a sort of deadly calmness, "that a great friend of mine is stopping here—Mr. Massingham. When—er—did he take his room?"

"Mr. Massingham?" The clerk glanced at the book. "Some time this afternoon, sir. He is upstairs now; would you like me to ring up his room?"

"No, thank you; I won't disturb him at this hour." He pushed a pound note across the desk and turned slowly away. Half unconsciously he walked over to the lift and stepped inside.

"Doris Lethbridge — John Massingham." Oh! dear God!

"What number, sir?" The lift-man was watching him a trifle curiously.

"Six hundred and ninety-four," said Hugh, mechanically. "No—seven hundred and ten, I mean."

"They are both on the same floor," said the man, concealing a smile. At the Magnificent slight confusion as to numbers of rooms was not unknown.

"Doris Lethbridge—John Massingham!"

The lift shot up, and still the names danced madly before his eyes. Every pulse in his body was hammering; wave upon wave of emotion rose in his throat, choking him; his mouth seemed parched and dry.

"Doris Lethbridge—John Massingham!"

"To the right, sir, for both rooms."

The door shut behind him and the lift sank rapidly out of sight. For a moment he stood in the long, deserted passage; then slowly, almost falteringly, he walked along it.

Six hundred and ninety. A pair of brown boots were outside, and Hugh stopped and looked at them critically.

"An unpleasant colour," he reflected; "most unpleasant."

A passing chambermaid glanced at him suspiciously, but Hugh stared right through her. He was supremely unconscious of her existence; only those two names mocked him wherever he looked, and the pair of unpleasant brown boots. He wondered if their owner was equally unpleasant.

Slowly he walked on. Six hundred and ninety-three—six hundred and ninety-four. He staggered a little, and leaned for a moment against the wall. Then, very deliberately, he pulled himself together and listened. There was no sound coming from the room at all. He listened for voices, but all was silent; and then suddenly he heard the click of a cupboard door closing.

So Doris was inside. Doris was inside—and—— Hugh took a deep breath; then he knocked.

"Who's there?" The Colt's voice, a little startled, came from the room, and Hugh's heart gave a great suffocating jump. His lips moved, but only a hoarse whisper came. He heard steps coming towards the door; the handle turned, and the next moment he was looking into the Colt's eyes.

For one second there shone in them the look of a great joy. Then she frowned quickly.

"What are you doing here?" she demanded. "I don't want to see you at all."

He pushed past her into the room, and for a while the relief was so wonderful that he could only stand there staring at her foolishly. Then at last he found his voice.

"Oh, my Colt," he whispered, brokenly, "thank God I've found you!" She closed the door and came slowly towards him. "Thank God I've found you—in time!" He said the last two words under his breath, but she heard them.

"What do you mean by 'in time'?" she said, and her voice showed no sign of relenting. "If you think I'm going to come home with you, you're quite wrong. Besides," she added, irrelevantly, "the last train's a beastly one. It stops everywhere."

Hugh looked at her with a faint smile, and then sat down on the edge of the bed.

"Colt," he said, slowly, "am I the biggest brute in the world? Am I a cad, and a poisonous beast? Am I, Colt?"

She stared at him, a little perplexed; then she shrugged her shoulders.

"Certainly not," she answered. "You're merely an inconsiderate and selfish man."

"Because," he went on, ignoring her remark, "if it's any gratification to you to know it, I should have to be everything I said to deserve such a punishment as you've given me."

"I don't see it at all," she remarked. "But—as a matter of fact—if you want to know, I wasn't going to stay away for good, as I said in my letter. I was going to come back in a week or so."

"What made you change your mind?" he asked, quietly.

"Something which happened to-night."

For a moment his collar felt strangely tight.

"Something which recalled you as you used to be—not as you are now. It made me determine to give you another chance."

"Ah—h!" A great sigh of relief came from the man. "Was it—a piece of music?"

She looked at him quickly.

"How did you know?"

"An arrow at a venture," he answered. "Was it Our Tune?"

"Yes—it was."

"And where did you hear it?"

"At the restaurant where I was dining." She lit a cigarette with studied indifference.

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"The Milan. I dined there with Mr. Massingham."

Hugh nodded thoughtfully.

"They give you good grub there, don't they? I see Massingham is stopping here."

"Is he?" said the girl. "I believe, now you mention it, he did say something about it." She was looking away, and did not see the sudden penetrating glance from the man on the bed. And he—in that one vital moment—knew, and was utterly and completely happy. His Colt was as innocent as a little child, and nothing else mattered on God's earth. Then, through the great joy which was singing in his brain, he heard her speaking again.

"I like Mr. Massingham, Hugh. And you will have to understand that if I consent to come back to you, it will only be on the condition that if I want to I can go out and dine with him."

It was at that moment that once again there came a knock on the door.

The Colt looked up quickly, and Hugh rose.

"In case it's a message," he whispered, "I'll get over here."

He moved to a place where he could not be seen, and waited. On his face there was a grim smile as he watched her cross the room. In his mind there was absolute certainty as to who had knocked. If she wanted to, after this, she should dine with Massingham as much as she wished.

She opened the door, and stopped in amazement.

"Mr. Massingham!" she gasped. "What on earth do you want?"

With a quick movement Massingham stepped into the room and shut the door.

"What do I want?" he answered, in the low, vibrant tone that was generally very successful. "Why, you, my darling little girl." Engrossed in his desire he failed to notice Hugh, who was leaning on a chest of drawers watching the scene. He also failed to notice that the look of blank amazement on the Colt's face had been succeeded by one of outraged fury. "Give him up, little girl," he went on, "give him up and come to me."

The next moment he staggered back, with a hand to his cheek.

"You little spitfire," he snarled, and then quite suddenly he stood very still. For Hugh's voice, clear and faintly amused, was speaking.

"Good for you, Colt. Now the other cheek."

The sound of a second blow rang through the room, and Hugh laughed gently.

"I—I——" stammered Massingham. "There's been a mistake. I—I—must apologize. The wrong room——"

He stood cringing by the door, staring fearfully at Hugh, who had left his position by the chest of drawers, and was standing in front of him.

"You lie, you miserable hound," said Lethbridge, contemptuously. "You've made a mistake right enough; but it was not a mistake in the matter of the room. You deliberately planned this whole show, and now——" he took him by the collar, "you can reap the reward."

He shook Massingham, as a terrier shakes a rat; then he flung him into a corner.

"Open the door, Colt," he said, quietly, "and we'll throw the mess into the passage."

The mess did not wait to be thrown; it gathered unto itself legs, and departed rapidly.

"Hang it!" said Hugh, as he closed the door. "I've nearly broken my toe on him."

He limped to the bed, where he sat rubbing his foot. Just once he stole a glance at the Colt, who was standing rigidly by the mantelpiece; then he resumed the rubbing. And on his face there was a faint, tender smile.

Then the massage ceased as a pair of soft arms came round his neck from behind.

"Boy! oh boy!" and her mouth was very close to his ear. "You don't think—oh! tell me you don't think—that I——"

He put his hand over her mouth.

"It's no question of thinking, my Colt, I know——" For a while he stared at the face so close to his own; then very gently he kissed her on the lips. "I know—I was at the Milan myself to-night, Colt—behind a pillar. I told 'em to play Our Tune."

He stood up and smiled at her.

"We'll manage the show better now. I've been worried; I've been a fool. I won't be any more. And now it's time you went to bed." He turned away abruptly. "I'll be getting off to my own room."

But she was at the door before him, arms outstretched, barring the way.

"Just wait a moment," she cried, a little breathlessly, "I want to telephone before—before you go——"

"Telephone!" His surprise showed on his face. "At this hour."

But the Colt was already speaking.

"Halloa! Is that the office? Oh! it's Mrs. Lethbridge speaking. My husband has suddenly arrived. He has a room here, so could you give us a double room, in exchange for our two singles? You can? Thank you."

She replaced the receiver and turned to the Man.

"There are a whole lot of things I don't understand," she said, demurely, "and it won't be any more expensive."

But the Man had her in his arms.

"My Colt!" he whispered, triumphantly, "My Colt!"

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Stories and Reflections by

MARTIN HARVEY

"MY God! My boy, you ought to be paying me for teaching you, instead of expecting me to pay you." In the days of my youth, Sir Henry Irving thus admonished me. He was right. He taught me all I know, and looking back along the path I have travelled I realize how stupid I must have been. The conceit of youth, however, is wonderful, although it may be an asset if it inspires confidence.

I remember my pride when I was selected for the part of attendant to the messenger in "Much Ado About Nothing"—the first play in which I appeared at the Lyceum. I had no words to speak, but I determined that that part should be presented as it had never been presented before. I was not going to let the opportunity slip. At that time I prided myself upon my taste in clothes. I had become a sort of incipient Beau Brummell, and my absorption in such matters as the cut of a coat, the shape of a collar, or the pattern of a tie irritated my dear, practical father beyond words.

What more natural, therefore, than that I should seek to impress Sir Henry in particular, and the public in general, with the attire of that messenger. I went out and bought a feather. It was a wonderful feather—a dream of youthful vanity—and I stuck it in my hat. I went farther. Moustaches had a certain fascination for me. I believe other youths have suffered similarly, and so I painted on my upper lip what, to my mind, was a beautiful moustache.



MARTIN HARVEY AS ŒDIPUS REX.

Photo. "Daily Mirror" Studios.

Alas for youthful dreams! No sooner did Sir Henry catch sight of me than he pointed a long, lean forefinger, and with that dreadful preliminary "Ha—hem!" of his, growled, "Take out that boy." I fear I must have offended his artistic eye, as I did at another rehearsal when, being slightly out of place, he rapped out:—

"Don't stand there—get back, get back. You are like a cabbage in the foreground of a beautiful landscape."

I have said that I irritated my father with my foppish ideas. I did more than that in the planning of my future. I was a grievous disappointment to him. When a devoted father, with a successful business, seeks to make his son's path in life an easy one to travel, places all his experience at the boy's command, offers him opportunities of carrying on a sound commercial undertaking, and that

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boy talks of retiring to Italy and devoting himself to lyrical poetry, he may be excused if he calls him "a confounded ass" and comes to the conclusion that the boy is hopelessly mad. I was such a boy, and can only feel thankful now that my father was indulgent. He saw that my heart was not in the work of designing boats and yachts.

A visit to the theatre had led me to abandon the idea of becoming a poet. I had come to the conclusion that the stage was my *forte*, and I was so enthusiastic that my father was impressed by the fact that for the first time I took an interest in some sane subject. He seized the opportunity, when the late Sir W. S. Gilbert came to Wyvenhoe to consult him about a yacht, to tell him that I wanted to go on the stage, and asked Gilbert's advice. Gilbert eyed me critically, and finally gave me a letter of introduction to John Ryder, a famous old actor, who had a great vogue as a teacher of aspirants for the stage. And so my fate was settled.



AS HAMLET.

A PORTRAIT BY ARTHUR HACKER, R.A.

Photo. Dixon.

Love of the drama, however, would seem to have been born with me. I have distinct recollections of an occasion when, as a boy of eight or nine, I spent hours in the compilation of a five-act tragedy, in which I cast myself for the leading part. A rather pathetic footnote to the programme asked the audience, consisting of my parents and other relatives and friends, to abstain from laughing. They kept serious faces while the most sensational events occurred on the improvised stage, but when I had killed off all the other actors and committed suicide myself, the final scene proved too much for their gravity. As everyone was killed, there was not an actor left to lower the curtain. After a pause I came to life again, and rose from the corpse-strewn stage to let the curtain down, and so informed the audience that the performance was over.

During my fourteen years with Sir Henry Irving I gained inva'uable experience. But it was Ryder who laid the foundation. He was a genius as a teacher, and certainly one of the most interesting and remarkable characters in the profession. He had supported Charles Kean, and had been leading man to Macready. Ellen Terry made some of her early appearances with Ryder, whom she picturesquely describes as "a pugnacious man, an admirable actor, and in appearance like an old tree that has been struck by lightning, or a greenless barren rock." It is also Miss Terry who tells a vivid little anecdote which admirably illustrates Ryder's curious brand of humour.

"D'ye suppose he engaged me for my powers as an actor?" Ryder used to say of Kean. "Not a bit of it! He engaged me for my archæological figure."

I know the story has become almost a classic, and, since Ryder's days, been attributed to other actor-managers. But Ryder was really the hero of the story, and I tell it because it illustrates, better than any description, the ruggedness of his character.

He was rehearsing a play in which a thunderstorm was supposed to take place. Men were sent aloft to produce the effect of thunder by rolling cannon-balls over the fly-floor above the stage. Ryder was dissatisfied

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AS SYDNEY CARTON IN "THE ONLY WAY."
Photo. Stereoscopic Co.

with the effect produced by the thunder-makers.

"No! No! No! That won't do," he roared. "Not loud enough."

It happened that a real and very violent thunder-storm was raging outside, and a loud crash of thunder occurred just as Ryder called out "Not loud enough." Ryder heard the peal. It did not suit him at all. "Louder! Louder!" he called out, angrily, whereupon a voice from above shouted in an aggrieved tone :—

"Beg your pardon, sir, but that was Gawd Almighty."

"I cannot help that," retorted Ryder, with rising choler. "It may be good enough for God Almighty, but it's not good enough for John Ryder."

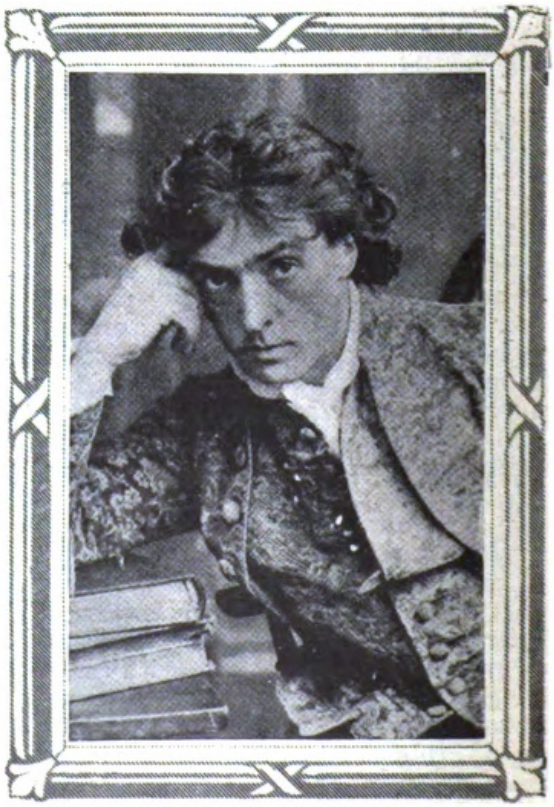
Gilbert's great kindness to me in those early days is a very pleasant memory. I had made my *début* at the Court Theatre at a guinea a week, playing the small part of a boy in "To Parents and Guardians." Dressed in a Kate Greenaway costume, with a concertina-like hat, I made my entrance with a wild war-whoop. This was my first part, and I distinctly recall how the war-whoop died into a sort of death-rattle as I made my first appearance before an audience in a frenzy of stage fright.

It was during the run of this piece that I dropped in at the Criterion one day to watch Gilbert rehearsing "Foggerty's Fairy," a venture which did not succeed. I was not very satisfied with myself, and learning this, Gilbert, during the interval, introduced me to Sir Charles Wyndham, with the words :—

"Can you give this young shaver anything?"

Sir Charles thought he could. He offered me the boy's part in a farce called "Betsy," which he was sending on tour. He offered £2 a week. I wanted £3, a sum which was ultimately agreed upon. Now mark the conceit and extravagance of youth. In my arrogant pride at having been engaged to play a part at an appreciable salary, I promptly put up at the best hotel in Newcastle, where we opened, to the wonder and admiration of the rest of the company. But the end of my brief splendour came with a hopeless crash. My salary would not meet the bill at the end of the week, and the manager had to come to my rescue by advancing me another week's salary.

I am afraid I was rather an impossible youth in those days. I know I was the



AS EUGENE ARAM.
Photo. Stereoscopic Co.

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despair of the stage-manager at the early rehearsals. In one part of the play I had to kiss the sprightly widow of the farce. My idea was the grave, dignified, respectful kiss—the kiss of the old school, inspired by a lofty passion. We tried that kiss several times. The charming lady who played the widow told me to give her a hug and a kiss, and get the scene over. But somehow, that kiss was a stumbling-block.

The stage-manager almost tore his hair with despair, and at last cried to the stage, the actors, and to me, "Ye gods, he kisses her as if she were his grandmother. Have you never kissed a chambermaid? Do it that way, and let's get on."

I dreamt on that tour of brilliant achievements, of London managers wishing to see me play the part, and offering me innumerable engagements. Then I awoke to nasty realities. After five weeks the tour came to an end, and for eight months I had to live on my father's bounty, when a lucky chance led to an introduction to Bram Stoker, and I got an engagement at the Lyceum—as a super. It was tragic humiliation, but was the best thing that could have happened to me. For fourteen years I trained and played with Sir Henry Irving's company, and accompanied it to America on four occasions.



IN "THE BREED OF THE TRESHAMS."
Photo. Stereoscopic Co.



AS NAPOLEON.
Photo. Stereoscopic Co.

I have said that Irving taught me all I know; that the training and experience I gained at the Lyceum were invaluable. I must confess, however, that many of the years I spent with the Lyceum company were to me a very bitter disappointment. Progress seemed impossible—at least it seemed so slow as to be almost negligible, and I think I should have despaired if I had not been able, during the last five or six years of my association with Irving, to go into the country with other members of the company on what we used to call a Lyceum Vacation Tour, and try our wings in the big parts.

This was really my salvation. It taught me something of the art of management, and gave me opportunities, and my wife, too, of playing big parts and putting into practice the splendid solid training in technique that we had got at the Lyceum. Apart from this, my only happiness at this period of my career came from living in an atmosphere of concentrated devotion to the work in hand, and the fact that my wife was a member of the company largely mitigated

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MISS N. DE SILVA (Mrs. Martin Harvey).
Photo, Schmidt.

the despondency I felt at times on account of my disappointments.

"The Holy Trinity," as we were wont to call Irving, Bram Stoker, and "Dear Old Loveday," the stage director, were autocrats at rehearsals. Rehearsals, in fact, were so frequent and regular that Sir Arthur W. Pinero, when a member of the company, so the story goes, put up a satirical call: "Twelve o'clock—Mr. Arnot (the property master) to drive a screw into the flat, and principals and everyone concerned in the production to see him do it."

William Terriss, William Haviland, Frank Tyars, Sam Johnson, and Tom Mead were the popular figures of Irving's company in those days. Mead was a fine old figure, with a magnificent voice. He made a great reputation in Iachimo, the heavy part in "Cymbeline." He was also a wonderful ghost in "Hamlet," and used to play Irving's father in "The Lyons Mail."

But he was very absent-minded. Indeed, he often rolled out his splendid words perfectly when his mind was wandering. There is a scene in "The Lyons Mail" in which the guilt of the son becomes clear to the father. The old man urges his son to commit suicide. The son protests he is not guilty. One night Mead spoke the father's lines, which many will know, with obvious absent-mindedness.

"They have not seen you as I have seen you, a pistol in one hand, a dagger in the other, and in the other——" Mead stopped with the third "other," still absent-minded, but beginning to recollect himself.

"And in the other?" Irving insisted under his breath. "And in the other—say it, my boy, say it. And in the other—a broomstick."

It was Loveday, however, who told me a story which is charmingly characteristic of the courage of the famous actor, and yet not without its pathos. Loveday relinquished a musical career to join Irving, and towards the end there were signs that he would not be able to go on much longer. He saw there might be poverty before him, or at least a life on a meagre income. But he did not care.

"Why," he would explain to Loveday, "I have lived on fifty shillings a week, and can do it again. We'll have a little cottage in the country, old friend, and you shall take the old violin from its case and come over each evening and play to me."

My association, after leaving the Lyceum, with Forbes Robertson in "Hamlet" and Mrs. Patrick Campbell in "Pelleas and Melisande" was of the happiest description. In those days Maeterlinck and his work were but little known in this country. I took the keenest interest, however, in the part of Pelleas, and am proud to think that I shared in the success of the play. I remember how fascinated I was with the story; how my wife and I spent hours designing the dress, and how thrilled I was when I heard that Maeterlinck had come over for the dress rehearsal.

After the rehearsal I left the theatre quietly, nervous and anxious to know what Maeterlinck thought, although I was convinced I had expressed all I had ever read into Pelleas. I went straight home to my rooms in Baker Street. My wife greeted me and breathlessly told me that Maeterlinck was waiting impatiently to see Pelleas. He had taken a cab and driven straight from the theatre with Alfred Sutro, who had suggested me for the part in the first place. He had been telling my wife what he thought about my performance. "Maeterlinck," she said, "has paid you the highest compliment one man has ever paid to another. He says you have stolen his soul."

To my wife I really owe the success which fell to me when, following "Pelleas and Melisande," I entered on the management of the Lyceum Theatre and produced "The Only Way." This was in February, 1899, and for years we had plotted and planned for the day when we should be able to produce the play as first conceived by her.

We were touring America as members of Irving's company—young, enthusiastic, very

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much in love and simmering with ambition. It was in those days that Mrs. Harvey saw a vision of a drama built on "A Tale of Two Cities." She saw the life of the ill-fated Sydney Carton as a great acting opportunity for me when I should embark on managership. The opportunity did not come for years. But in the meantime, we hugged our pet to our bosoms, dressed it, and cared for it, waiting the chance to present the child of our brain to the world.

I despaired when, having secured the loan of a suburban theatre and borrowed £75 from Mr. John Leigh, the man who had lent me the theatre withdrew his promise, in order to oblige another friend. Then I heard that the Lyceum was vacant for a short period. In a flash I saw my chance. "Launch out boldly and produce 'The Only Way' there," I said to myself. Arrangements were completed, when Irving asked me as a friend to abandon the idea, as the tribunal scene, it was thought, almost immediately before the Robespierre play which he was producing, would prejudice his interests.



AS DAVID GARRICK.
Photo Drew.



IN "A CIGARETTE-MAKER'S ROMANCE."
Photo. Stereoscopic Co.

I was anxious to retire, but my wife urged me not to do so. Finally I discussed the matter with Bram Stoker. "It's not a question of sentiment," he said, in his blunt way, "it's a question of rent. We want the rent, and begad we'll have it." And they did. "The Only Way" was produced, and on the first night Irving sent me a splendid message of good cheer. Can you wonder that I loved the man?

But my pen runs away with me. There are so many tributes one could pay to those who, as the years have passed, have held out the helping hand, spoken the encouraging word. There are so many good people who have helped me to please the public with such productions as "A Cigarette-Maker's Romance" and "The Breed of the Treshams"—who are helping me still in the profession which of all professions is so alluring, so fascinating, so difficult. But space cries "Halt," and if in these few reminiscences I have afforded the readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE a little pleasant reading, I am pleased too.

"THE UNCHARTED COAST."

"Shadows on the Screen," the third of Sir A. Conan Doyle's new series of articles, is unavoidably held over.

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The Mirror and the Incense

by Gerald Villiers Stuart

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

AT the moment when Fate flung Judith Heaton into Lawrence Blake's life she was a woman with a past and he was a man with a record. A very fine record it was, but filed away in the Foreign Office and in the minds of a few men. Very little could have been told without endangering the equilibrium of Asiatic thrones. Dangerous little exploration stunts and big-game shooting were the hobbies assigned to him by certain members of his club who thought they knew him. In reality he could have spared but little time for such frivolities as he wandered through China disguised as a Burman, or through Burma disguised as a Chinaman, gathering information in bazaars as a bee gathers honey in a garden. Of all the Eastern kingdoms he had visited, only to Tibet had he paid the compliment of touring it as a Tibetan.

"Strong, silent man," you might think, but that wasn't his type; he was imaginative and swayed by impish humour. Limitless curiosity, a rapid-fire brain, and vast belief in himself had carried him over the crises of his life. There was some grey in his hair, and lines in a face illuminated by slaty-blue incandescent eyes which untrained observers considered were touched with insanity. In reality they merely revealed the swift thought-changes occurring behind them. Judith Heaton, trained observer of men, had come to that correct conclusion as she faced him across the restaurant table somewhere in Soho. Blake had chosen to dine at a restaurant to escape the necessity of telling lies to a man at his club.

Judith Heaton had been chosen by Le Poisson Rouge and destiny. She had been taken to that restaurant by a man who wanted to force a quarrel on her for purposes of perpetual parting. The man was rich and powerful theatrically; Le Poisson Rouge was cheap. Judith was touchy on such subjects with the touchiness of women who have been obliged to consider, and, worse still, to reconsider, their value in the eyes of men.

Destiny, in the person of a distracted head-waiter on a crowded night, took the lid off Judith Heaton's temper by putting the pair at a table already occupied by a man, and a man who was so lost in thought that he did not become aware of her challenging presence until her companion requested the salt for his soup.

Having become aware of the woman's presence at his table, Blake paid her the secret compliment of a thumb-nail character-sketch.

"Meant to be beautiful in the right way," he summarized the woman across the table; "been warped by her environment; never was meant to look so defiant, pathetic, and—yes—hunted. She's been up against it—up against it at this moment."

Blake was not a ladies' man; he had rather avoided women; yet he thought a great deal about them in the abstract, and several times during his forty years of life chivalry had impelled him to play Providence quixotically. The personality of the man at his table, who was of some Latin Semitic race, aroused animosity; the fragile, dainty beauty of the woman and something which emanated from her, a symphony pathétique, as though she were a musical instrument strung to breaking-point and played upon by remorseless fingers, inclined him to sympathize after a semi-detached fashion.

Blake knew that the crisis approached by the glitters and flashes from the woman's blazing eyes, as he had known of the approach of an Afghan attack by helio flashes from the ridge-pole of the world. Judith Heaton was paying a price she could not

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afford for the pleasure of telling a man what she thought of him.

The man smiled a triumphant smile. "Then there is nothing more to be said, *mon amie*. I accept my dismissal." He sauntered out, leaving the woman to her tears, her humiliation, and the companionship of a stranger.

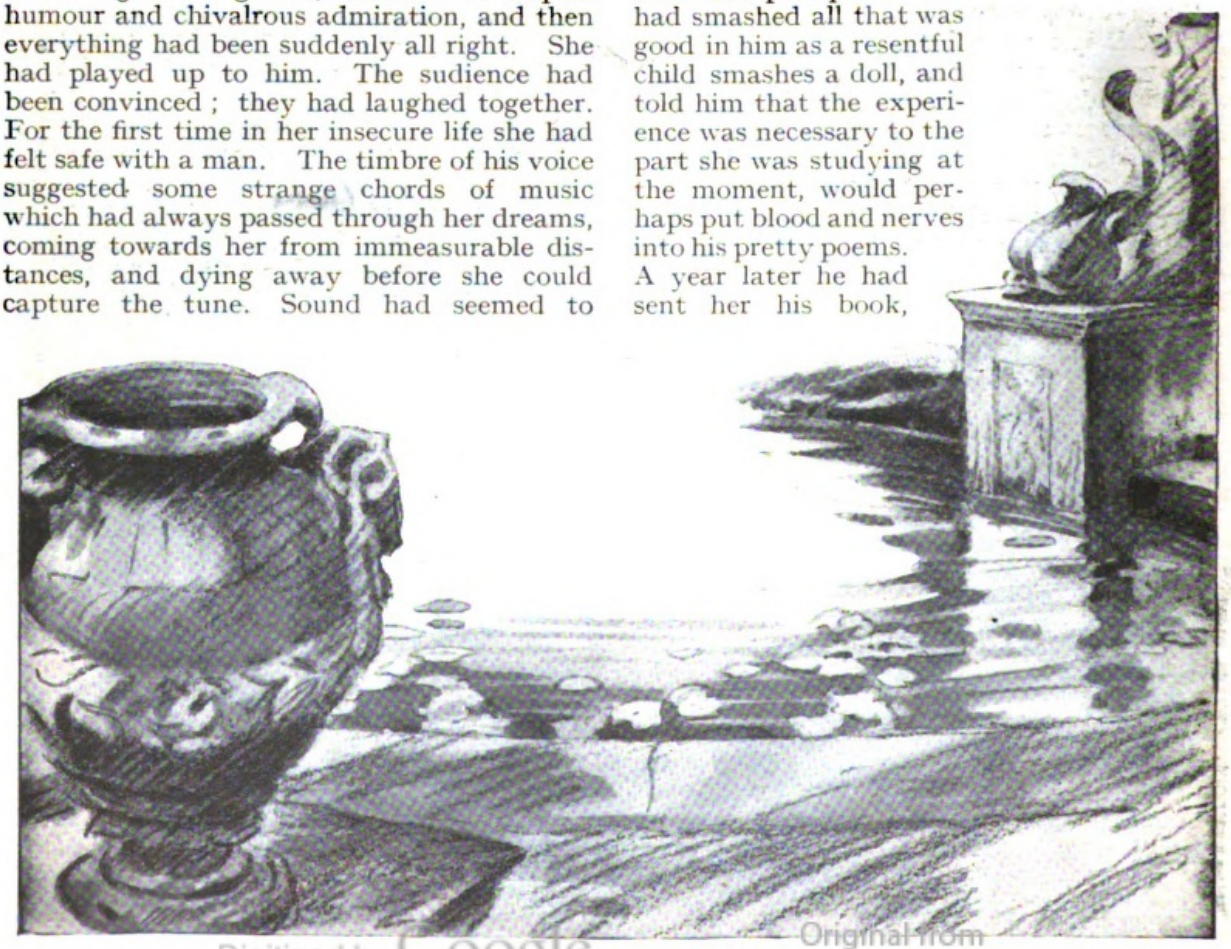
Time had only clipped one month from the coupons of Judith Heaton's



"'THEN THERE IS NOTHING MORE TO BE SAID, MON AMIE. I ACCEPT MY DISMISSAL' HE SAUNTERED OUT, LEAVING THE WOMAN TO HER TEARS."

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life since the episode at Le Poisson Rouge, and what matters a month? As a rule, very little. A few cubic feet of air also mean very little, but compress them in a cylinder and they become dynamic. This month had been dynamic both to Judith Heaton and Lawrence Blake. As she waited in her little Chelsea flat for Blake to come and say good-bye, Judith re-lived every tense hour of the time which had elapsed since she had met him. Each one clicked past like pictures in a cinema play. She saw herself sobbing, humiliated, conscious of the looks and thoughts of the inhabitants of Le Poisson Rouge, conscious of the man across the table who had been swept into the current of her life. From his keen, efficient, clean-shaven face and strange blue eyes she had assumed he was a sailor-man and would make some blundering, kindly effort at rescue which would further complicate the situation. She had felt his impulse to escape, and then his swift decision to help. She laughed even now at the remembered sound of his voice, loud enough to reach the other tables: "Buck up, Madeleine! Of course Aunt Emily's death was a shock, and it's just like your solicitor to break the news in public; but after all she was over eighty, and she did not suffer." She had looked up and caught his glance, blended of impish humour and chivalrous admiration, and then everything had been suddenly all right. She had played up to him. The sudience had been convinced; they had laughed together. For the first time in her insecure life she had felt safe with a man. The timbre of his voice suggested some strange chords of music which had always passed through her dreams, coming towards her from immeasurable distances, and dying away before she could capture the tune. Sound had seemed to play a part in the first phases of their mutual attraction. They had agreed never to meet again, so it would not matter if for one evening they voiced their thoughts, and Blake, speaking with the Oriental touch which distinguished him, had said that her laugh was like the sound of fairy bells outworn, and her tears like the dropping of dew from rose-leaf to rose-leaf; familiar from all time and yet elusive. She had told him about her life and the wreckage of her ideals by a bigamous marriage, of her consequent vendetta against men, her determination to use them for her own ends as one man had used her. She had told him of her life on the stage, her success in "Highbrow" drama; of her career as a militant Suffragette, and how she had gone to prison for sinking the yacht of a Cabinet Minister at Cowes by getting on board in the character of a lady friend and opening the sea-cocks. But she had not told Blake about young Ellison, who had fallen in love with her while she was still mad with resentment against his sex. She shivered now as she remembered how she had played upon that man's poetical ideas of love and life, developed them, raised him in her arms to the very summit of human experience, then laughed and pushed him over the precipice. She had smashed all that was good in him as a resentful child smashes a doll, and told him that the experience was necessary to the part she was studying at the moment, would perhaps put blood and nerves into his pretty poems. A year later he had sent her his book,



"HE HAD CONVINCED HER THAT SHE WAS THE WOMAN OF HIS

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"Poems from the Pit," slimy but wonderful. Why exhibit such a skeleton to spoil the memory of a delicious evening, since they were never to meet again unless, as Blake had said, "Fate wills it. I am a fatalist."

She recalled the thrill which went through her when she had heard Blake's voice a week later in the garden of the house on the Thames, and found that they were fellow-guests. Their eyes had met across the garden and revealed how much they had been thinking of one another, how they had bridged the years with thought. How hard they had tried to keep up the barriers of pretence, to defend themselves with laughter! She had feared him because he was a man who



DREAMS, THE ONE FOR WHOM HE HAD SEARCHED AND WAITED.

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idealized women and put them on pinnacles where they could not breathe. He had feared her because he wanted to travel fast and alone. She smiled as she remembered the brevity of the effort to pass by. The very next day, when they had tried to hide from one another what they were feeling, laughter had suddenly failed them. How sweet it had been! They had commenced sentences which had ended because breath caught in the throat. They had suddenly felt helpless in the grip of outside superior forces. There was a sound like the rush of wings; she had found herself in his arms. Yet she had kept her head in a way; she had searched, oh! so hard, for chivalry or pity as his motive, still more for the infatuation which experience had taught her so often masqueraded as love, and which she could so easily arouse in men. But he had convinced her that she was the woman of his dreams, the one for whom he had searched and waited. His love had swept her up to a summit where she no longer feared to be idealized; her love for him made her feel that she could be whatever he had dreamed, whatever he might dream a woman should be. At last she had come to believe that to be idealized was her only hope of escape from her past. Then, three weeks later, as they stood by the open window of her flat arranging their marriage, newsboys had rushed past shouting "The Serajevo Assassinations!" and Blake had told her that meant his instant departure for the East. She had declined to marry him before he left, and now she was waiting to say good-bye.

Blake was late; perhaps he was never coming, perhaps he had heard something. Judith was shaken, too, by a terrible night haunted by the ghosts of the past. Young Ellison had led the van, and a red-winged demon to whom she had given a latchkey. "We'll find our way in," they had taunted her, "when your man goes East. Your future is your past, the present is a mirage. You have neither strength nor principle, and your saviour man won't be here to lend you his; besides, you have never told him about me. You dare not." So Judith was almost hysterical when Lawrence Blake arrived; she clung to him and begged him to stay and save her; then ordered him to go and leave her for ever, since she was not worth saving. He must have understood enough to take her mood seriously, for he turned from her and plunged into seas of thought. When he returned to the woman he loved, where she sobbed on the sofa arm, he looked weary from intensive reflection, but there was also the ghost of an impish smile. He took her into his arms almost roughly; he wanted her thoroughly under his dominion.

"Look here," he said, "you have got to believe what I am going to tell you, strange and incredible as it may seem to you. If you can, it will make everything all right."

"Oh! I'll try, Lawrence." She nestled against him happily. "It's easy enough when it's like this."

"I'm going to give you something that will make you safe when—when it's not like this, Judith. Something I got in Tibet."

"An amulet?" she hazarded, despondently.

"No. I expect you know that some of these Tibetan monks have carried thought to a point where, in our eyes, it becomes magic. Human wireless, that's how it seems to me. We play with the fringe of telepathy, but we are as crude in that line as they are in mechanics. We can't link our thoughts to one another's at a distance because we haven't developed concentration. But this thing I got in that old monastery, this magic I am going to leave with you, will enable you to annihilate the idea of distance between you and me; only our bodies will be distant. It's a mirror, and there's a drug, a sort of incense. When you burn it and look into the mirror through the smoke, you will see yourself exactly as I am thinking of you."

"Idealized?" she asked, breathlessly, carried away by the idea, convinced by her lover's earnestness.

"Perhaps. As you live in my thoughts, the *you* God planned, the *you* of the past and the future, the vision wonderful which I have seen through all the dust of the earth."

"My wonderful! My saviour!" she whispered, looking into the strong light of Lawrence Blake's eyes with eyes that were exalted with the strong inrush of belief. "It is true. I know it. All true. Give me the mirror and the incense and go far away, my darling. I long to live in your thoughts of me."

Then the lovers parted, and again Judith Heaton had allowed Lawrence Blake to go without telling him about young Ellison.

It was an octagon mirror, framed in bronze, which Blake sent by messenger to his betrothed. The bronze was so old that the Chinese symbols wrought into the design were almost indistinguishable. With it there was an old bronze box, full of a large-grained aromatic powder, and two small braziers of the same metal. He had extracted a promise from Judith that she would only make use of the mirror when she was too despondent, too much in the depths, to pull herself together without its help. Also, that she would always keep the mirror veiled.

Judith kept her promise about not making use of the mirror. Blake's letters sufficed, and some strong magnetism which he had

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left behind him in the flat. But gradually her old world impinged on her loneliness. Men and women of her previous exotic existence, who knew nothing of her changed outlook, brought the fever of their lives into the hush of her life. She tried to keep the world at bay, but she had only a tiny private income, and she was driven by stress of war prices to return to the stage, to do war work, to emerge from the cloistered flat where she had felt safe in her lover's imagined presence, reading his letters over and over again. He had written from Afghanistan, and, last, from Persia. His letters ceased when she needed them most, when she was finding it most hard to believe in herself. Old fevers were waking in her blood, and she was very, very lonely. She would look longingly at the mirror. Not to make use of it was like fighting against the desire for a drug. And all the time she lost faith in herself, in her personality.

One evening she was of a party in which everyone seemed to be living in the present, because the future might never come. It was during that strange, irresponsible phase of the war which might be summed up in the words, "the laughter of London, the boasts of Berlin." Perhaps London laughed because Berlin boasted; or did Berlin boast because London laughed? Or was it the constant stream of young officers with money to spend on their feverish reprieves or postponements from death and wounds which the War Office call "leave"? There were four reprieved officers in the party. One of them had the key to an empty house. They turned it into a night club and danced. Between the dances one of these officers kissed Judith—rapturously. She struck him fiercely, sobbed heartbrokenly, and went home.

Judith examined her face in the mirror, not Blake's magical one, but her own. Yes, it was the face of a woman men kissed lightly, in a moment of passion. There was a devil behind the eyes, beckoning them towards the soft red lips which curved below. What was the use of trying to live on a summit with a face like that, a devil-haunted face? What was the use of struggling? Better to drug her nerves with imitation love and drown their cries in the excitement of the present. Lawrence had ceased writing; perhaps he had never really thought of her except as that young officer had thought. She was one of God's doomed, of whom a Calvinist grandfather had told her as a child. She had an impulse to break the mirror and blot out her face. Then she suddenly remembered that other mirror. It was surely for such a moment as this her lover had left her his magic. With hands which shook with excitement, fear, suspense, she filled the braziers from the incense-box. She placed the bronze mirror on a table in her sitting-room, out of sight of that other mirror which had reflected that inmate she feared and hated, the red-winged demon to whom she had given the latchkey. The sitting-room was still faintly permeated by her lover's magnetism. Sitting in front of the high altar of her hopes, she lit the braziers. A faint fragrance as of wistaria blossoms drifted towards her in the tiny smoke-wreaths, which took, she thought, strange shapes like the characters on the bronze.

Judith prayed, but it was to Lawrence Blake. She called aloud to her lover, and the vibrations of her breath played with the incense-wreaths and altered their cabalistic forms. A feeling of rest and peace came to her out of the fragrance of the incense-mist. She seemed to be drifting towards some Nirvana, and yet to be endowed with unusual powers of concentration, so that she could almost materialize her lover. She no longer feared to draw the curtain; she was going to see herself through that lover's eyes. Her belief was implicit. She was unaware of the sleepy gesture with which she moved aside the silken veil.

Judith clasped her hands, a rapturous crooning drifted from her lips. Was this girl, still spangled with the dews of other worlds and sweet wise wonderings about this one—this girl with the look of dawn in her eyes—*herself?* True, she could remember a time when her own mirror had revealed such a picture, but that was ten years ago, and even then she had not such beauty. Oh! if this was how she seemed to Lawrence Blake, no wonder he loved her. Of course she was not as beautiful as that, but if she thus lived in her lover's eyes, in her lover's heart, why, then this beauty lived in the only place which mattered, and everything else, the man at the dance and that other mirror, was a bad dream. Almost in love with the reflection, she gazed and gazed into the mirror. Her mind was so concentrated on her lover, so great a feeling of nearness pervaded her, that she seemed to be waiting for his face to appear in the mirror, his presence in the room. She willed it with all her power. For a moment she thought that his face was reflected as though he stood behind her, but before she could grasp the passing shadow a terrible feeling of anxiety, desolation, suffering, came down upon her like some impalpable fog. The incense-wreaths turned into sand-storms; she felt as though she was cornered—in some place where there was weakness because there was no food. A vision of great sand-stretches, tents, camels, and gaunt, anxious, suffering men waiting in an

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agony of suspense took her place in the mirror.

Judith's next experience of consciousness was when she raised herself on her elbow. It was dawn. She lay on the floor of her sitting-room. The silken curtain had been drawn across the mirror.

After that night Judith found it no more possible to resist the magic call of Blake's mirror. It was as though she had yielded to a drug and could not live without it. She did not always see the same face through the incense-wreaths—or, rather, it was the same face seen from different angles, and she knew with rapture that each mirrored vision had been transmuted through her lover's eyes. To draw aside the silken veil at night after wondering all the day how her lover would be thinking of her, and to find herself ever more wonderful in his sight, was more exquisite than to meet him in the flesh. He never failed her,

It was well that she could drug herself with magic, for it dulled the anxiety caused by Blake's long silence, her ignorance of his whereabouts, and the dim visions which made a background in the mirror. Sand and suspense, peril and anxiety. Yet he lived; however precariously, in whatever danger—he lived.

Then came a night when the vision in the background altered. There was no longer the feeling of being hemmed in. Through the dust-storms of the incense she saw men on the march; anxiety was replaced by humiliation, torture, and death. She suffered with her lover's suffering, but she did not know where he suffered. A few days later all England shivered with the knowledge that Kut had fallen, but Judith did not connect the tragedy and the vision. She knew from the papers that the garrison had started on their martyred march to Mosul, five hundred miles of horror. She knew from the mirror that Blake was on the move, but she did not know the truth. She even thought it was a symbol that he was returning to her.

It was about a week later that Judith Heaton experienced the night of horror. She had waited for midnight with beating heart as a woman waits for her lover. Would she be living in her lover's heart that night as the idealized girl of the first vision, or enraptured by his kisses, or alive with intellect? Would it be her body, mind, or soul which was uppermost in her lover's thoughts? As she drew aside the veil which parted her from herself, she hoped it would be her soul, she hoped——

A wailing, terrified cry shivered through the little sitting-room, disturbing the incense-wreaths. Judith had put one hand across her eyes as though to shut out some horror which could blast them. With the other hand she pushed back her chair from the table on which the mirror was propped. "No! No!" she seemed to implore some unseen being. From the way she retreated into a corner of the room you might have thought she was being pursued by some apparition. In a way it was an apparition, all the more devastating because it bore semblance to herself. She had not believed her eyes at the first glance, had thought it might be some trick of the incense. She had rubbed them and looked again, so there was no hope for her. There was no room for doubt. It was not even her vanity which had been wounded; never had the mirror reflected such beauty; every physical lure was accentuated. It was as though a great artist had tried to paint the spirit of evil in possession of a very exquisite woman, and the artist was Lawrence Blake. She was seeing herself through his eyes. This was how he was thinking of her. This beautiful harpy, this subtly-baited trap, this intellect rejoicing in the devastation of spirit, in evil for evil's sake, in the destruction of all good and human impulses. It was a caricature, the opposite pole of idealism. She remembered that young Ellison at parting had put into words very much of what the mirror had visualized. She had only laughed at him then; what had she cared what he thought of her? But this was Lawrence thinking now, the man she loved—the man who was her god, who had stooped down and saved her.

In the background there was again the sense of men in torment and humiliation, but these men seemed to be vanishing in the distance; through the dust-clouds into vast sand-spaces. Nearer there were two solitary figures: a man dressed like a Bedouin propping a man in tattered khaki against his knee, bent over him.

For a time Judith did not dare to use the mirror. She had a pathetic hope that if she prayed very hard and worked very hard at the hospital doing things which she hated the mirror would relent, would reveal her as she really was, neither angel nor devil, merely a suffering, struggling woman. The reflection was less vivid and more heart-breaking, as though Lawrence thought of her as one who destroyed illusions out of sheer devilry, but that it mattered less. There was an atmosphere of great weariness. Again she caught a glimpse of the Bedouin. He rode a horse whose head swayed to its knees from exhaustion. He was alone.

The reflections blurred more and more, then cleared up and were as the reflections in any other mirror. Judith merely saw a broken-

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"SITTING IN FRONT OF THE BRONZE MIRROR, SHE LIT THE BRAZIERS. SHE CALLED ALOUD TO HER LOVER, AND THE VIBRATIONS OF HER BREATH PLAYED WITH THE INCENSE-WREATHS."

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hearted woman whose beauty was dimmed by tragic thoughts. The mirror had lost its magic, only the incense kept its strange fragrance, and soon the incense was finished.

Judith was convalescent from the effects of a nervous breakdown when Blake made his sensational return to London. One morning she had read in the papers about his escape on the prisoners' death march from Kut to Mosul; that evening he came to see her. He was changed: leaner, older, more sun-baked—harder. It was the face of a man who has lost his dearest possession out in a desert. It was the face of a man who has had illusions and lost them. Judith had seen it before in one man's face—young Ellison's. Judith saw the difference at once in his over-expressive eyes; pictures of horror on which he had gazed were barely hid behind them and a great disillusionment was there, the ghosts of dead dreams, the shadow of suffering. The strange incandescent quality which had first drawn her attention to Blake was more marked than ever.

Judith rose from the sofa and moved uncertainly; her natural impulse was to fling herself into his arms. She loved him, and they were engaged to be married. The mirror might have reflected hallucinations, his letters might have miscarried. Yet something in Blake's attitude made her pause and fiddle with some flowers on a table halfway. He did not speak, he seemed to be groping in her very soul for the truth, tearing her to pieces in the search. The great love-light in her eyes seemed only to puzzle the man.

"Why don't you speak to me? What is the matter? Why do you look at me like that?" Judith had not wanted to be the first to break the silence, but the words were forced from her in little gasps.

"So much has happened," he answered, sadly. "It was a chance in a thousand, my meeting poor Ellison; at least, your being the woman to whom I was to deliver the letters. There's nearly always some woman to whom a dying man sends a message, but that it should have been you! I wouldn't have let him tell me the story, which made me feel—well, feel as I felt about the woman who broke him. Perhaps I wouldn't have judged the woman as hard, had I known about whom the poor chap was talking. Besides, I couldn't have listened. But you look so white—poor little Judith." There was a great concern in his voice. "If it was my room, not yours, I'd ask you to sit down."

Judith collapsed into a chair. Blake went on quickly, as though he wanted to rush a terrible situation to its end.

"I don't think Ellison himself realized that by giving me the packet to take to you he was revealing the woman's identity, but when a man has been flogged along a dusty road without food or water till even a Turk can't get another yard out of him, his brain works in patches. Even as he told me his story I saw up to a point a resemblance. He had come into your life as I came, haphazard, from a desire to protect. He thought you were the woman of his dreams, and so did I. You made yourself so wonderful to him, mean so much to him, that if it wasn't true, nothing was true, no woman good. Here the resemblance ended in his case. You went out of your way to make him understand that there wasn't anything decent in man or woman, that the world was made of mud for them to wallow in. You deliberately——"

"I hated him, I hated him!" she cried out in her pain. "I hated all men. At that time I wanted to hurt them all, but I could only hurt one at a time, and he was so like the man who had smashed me, only younger."

"Judith, for God's sake," he pleaded, "don't talk as if I had put you on your trial; don't make it harder for me. It's all got to be said."

Judith laughed bitterly. "Trial! My execution, you mean. You tried and sentenced me months ago. I was at the trial. Thousands of miles away. You were right, there is no such thing as distance."

He went on, ignoring her words: "There was neither trial nor sentence, Judith. The poor devil only wanted to be sure you'd know that he had come to understand. That he regretted nothing. It hadn't made a man of him, but it had made a poet—and that was his ambition. The war made a man of him. He enlisted the first week. He became a first-rate soldier, and you can't say more for a man than that—a good poet and a good soldier. You and the war were instruments of destiny. No one puts destiny on its trial."

Brushing aside all her attempts to speak, he told her how he had made his way into Kut dressed as a native to get in touch with the Intelligence Staff, had gone to captivity with the rank and file instead of the officers, because it would be easier to escape; had killed one of the Arab escort on the third night and taken his place, herding the starving prisoners along the ghastly trail all that day. On the next night he had ridden away on the backward trail, come upon Private Ellison, who had been left for dead. "He was lucky," he ended; "he died on the fourth day. Some of them aren't dead yet."

And all the time she murmured: "I've seen it all. I've seen it all before in the mirror."

"You want to hurt me, you want to hurt

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"JUDITH'S NATURAL IMPULSE WAS TO FLING HERSELF INTO HIS ARMS. YET SOMETHING IN BLAKE'S ATTITUDE MADE HER PAUSE."

me with your hatred," she cried fiercely when he ceased. "I told you I wasn't the right kind of woman for you. Why didn't you stop then? Now, because you've found out that I'm not all the things I always told you I wasn't, you try to make out that I'm a devil. You wanted to be rid of me"—her eyes blazed hardly at him—"you are making the most of the excuse you stumbled on. Yes, I hurt that man's life. I wish I hadn't, but I'm not going to wear new sackcloth for the sin. I wore it long ago after reading his poetry. It's worn out now. Everybody hurts somebody before they die; they can't undo the wrong, they can only be sorry. You got tired of me. That's why you make the most of your discovery."

There is a certain gesture which men make when women say things as a wounded animal cries. Blake made it.

"Judith, I must make you understand. You think it's Ellison I'm so sorry for. Can't you see it's myself? Ellison's story made me understand. They say dreams go by contraries. It's daydreams which do that, Judith. It made me see that all the wonderful dream you had woven for me had no more reality than Ellison's, that all the pictures I had painted of you were so many mirages."

"They were wonderful mirages," she murmured, softly. "What a pity they were only painted on a mirror!"

"That you did not love me after all—had only amused yourself with studying love-scenes for the stage, as you told the other poor devil."

"You believe that?"

He bowed his head. "What else can I believe?"

"How dare you think such things of me?" she cried, angrily.

"The thought came. It wouldn't go away. I couldn't drive it away. Your love had always seemed too wonderful to be true, the swiftness of it, the burning strength of it something more than a man had any right to possess. I simply came to know that I had never possessed it, and my dreams fell in ruins like the other man's."

Judith came and stood close to him. "I'm not going to lose you to gratify my proper pride as a woman ought. There is a sound behind your words as if you still cared. Do you?"

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"I wish I didn't. I love you too well to live among the ruins of our castle in Spain, even if you were willing to share it. Now you know."

"If I told you there was no question of pity except for myself; if I told you that I loved you in every way a woman can love a man, would you believe me?"

"I would give—what wouldn't I give to believe you? But——" He shook his head sadly. "It is all a state of mind. I had it. I haven't it. My love for you is too wonderful a thing to compromise with."

"If I were the sort of woman you had in your mind as Ellison told his story to you, I would take you in my arms and make you know, make you feel my love. If I were like the girl you made me see in the mirror the first night I ever looked, I would simply cry. I am neither one nor the other, so I am without weapons I care to use, but——" She came up to him and looked into his eyes. "Oh, Lawrence, can't you see it, can't you see it?"

"If I hadn't seen it there before and then had it blotted out by another vision—— Oh, Judith, make me believe, but don't let me compromise!"

"As you made me believe in the mirror and the incense?"

"What mirror, what incense is this you keep talking about?"

"Why, the one you gave me, the terrible magical mirror which reflected your thoughts of me."

"I don't remember; so much has happened to me since, but there are no such things."

"Why, you said you got it in a monastery in Tibet. You said that I would see myself in it through your eyes, and I did. Why, I saw you bending over poor Ellison. I told you I did, but you wouldn't listen. I felt your suffering, the suffering of the garrison of Kut. I saw you on the march and I saw a devil's face, the devil you thought me. I saw myself through your eyes as a terrible being. Before that night I saw myself as you promised I should, as God planned me, or was it you? Anyway, it was wonderful. You can't have forgotten."

"It must be a dream. There is no such mirror in the world."

Judith went to her writing-desk and opened it.

"There it is." She held the mirror towards him.

Blake took it into his hands. The ghost of his impish smile revisited his face.

"Of course; now I remember. You were in the depths and I had an inspiration. This was to be a bridge across a difficult moment which I never expected to arrive. I made you believe in its magic, because belief in yourself was what you needed."

"You said it came from Tibet."

"It is possible. I bought it in the Jews' market that day near the docks—I mean the frame. I remember that. The mirror was made in Germany, so I didn't want to buy it. 'Ehrmann,' that was the name on the back." He pulled off the backing. "There it is, 'Ehrmann, Leipsic.'"

"But there was magic in it. I saw——" Judith's voice was halted by the catch of her breath. Unconsciously she moved closer to Blake, for a great light was dawning in his eyes, sweeping away that terrible look of tragedy and loss and wreckage. She realized that he had seen a great light—he stood transfigured before her. No, not transfigured, just the old Lawrence.

"Magic!" he laughed, happily; "the most wonderful that ever was. The mirror was only a means of concentration; there was no magic in that, but in you and in me, Judith. Our thoughts leaped space because you love me, that is the magic of the mirror to me. A sign from the clouds. If we are as near as that to one another, as much as that to one another, it is a love which was born behind the stars and you are the woman of my dreams, the end of my search."

"But the star-dust has all got rubbed off my wings on the way," whispered Judith, "so what's the good? You see only the earth-stains now."

Blake gathered Judith into his arms very slowly, as though he wished the wonder of it to last for ever.

"What do I care about the earth-stains, Judith, on you or on me? Earth-stains and star-dust, the betrayal of you, your betrayal of Ellison, they have all gone to the creation of this 'you' I love, to the bringing of us together. You saw yourself in the mirror through the eyes of love, mine for you, yours for me. That is enough. I asked for a miracle and it has been granted."

"Then you do believe that I love you, that I wasn't studying a part?" This was five minutes later, and Judith spoke from the haven of her lover's arms, where the minutes had been spent in silence.

"How like a woman to want it put into words——"

"Besides, I think you ought to apologize for doubting me and having to be convinced by a second-hand mirror."

"I think that, too, would be a mistake, darling, and so do you." Blake laughed and Judith gave a contented sigh. They were so human, in spite of the mirror and the magic and the place behind the stars whence they had started blindfold across the universe in search of one another.

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A KINK IN HIS CHARACTER

By

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY A. T. SMITH

A PLEASANT breeze played among the trees on the terrace outside the Marvis Bay Golf and Country Club. It ruffled the leaves and cooled the forehead of the Oldest Member, who, as was his custom of a Saturday afternoon, sat in the shade on a rocking-chair, observing the younger generation as it hooked and sliced in the valley below. The eye of the Oldest Member was thoughtful and reflective. When it looked into yours you saw in it that perfect peace, that peace beyond understanding, which comes at its maximum only to the man who has given up golf.

The Oldest Member has not played golf since the rubber-cored ball superseded the old dignified gutty. But as a spectator and philosopher he still finds pleasure in the pastime. He is watching it now with keen interest. His gaze, passing from the lemonade which he is sucking through a straw, rests upon the Saturday foursome which is struggling raggedly up the hill to the ninth green. Like all Saturday foursomes, it is in difficulties. One of the patients is zigzagging about the fairway like a liner pursued by submarines. Two others seem to be digging for buried treasure, unless—it is too far off to be certain—they are killing snakes. The remaining cripple, who has just foozled a mashie-shot, is blaming his caddie. His voice, as he upbraids the innocent child for breathing during his up-swing, comes clearly up the hill.

The Oldest Member sighs. His lemonade gives a sympathetic gurgle. He puts it down on the table.

How few men, says the Oldest Member, possess the proper golfing temperament! How few, indeed, judging by the sights I see here on Saturday afternoons, possess any qualification at all for golf except a pair of baggy knickerbockers and enough money to enable them to pay for the drinks at the end of the round! The ideal golfer never loses his temper. When I played, I never lost my temper. Sometimes, it is true, I may, after missing a shot, have broken my club across my knees; but I did it in a calm and judicial spirit, because the club was obviously no good and I was going to get another one anyway. To lose one's temper at golf is foolish. It gets you nothing, not even relief. Imitate the spirit of Marcus Aurelius. "Whatever may befall thee," says that great man in his "Meditations," "it was preordained for thee from everlasting. Nothing happens to anybody which he is not fitted by nature to bear." I like to think that this noble thought came to him after he had sliced a couple of new balls into the woods, and that he jotted it down on the back of his score-card. For there can be no doubt that the man was a golfer, and a bad golfer at that. Nobody who had not had a short putt stop on the edge of the hole could possibly have written the words: "That which makes the man no worse than he was makes life no worse. It has no power to harm, without or within." Yes, Marcus Aurelius undoubtedly played golf, and all the evidence seems to indicate that he rarely went round in under a hundred and twenty. The niblick was his club.

Speaking of Marcus Aurelius and the golfing temperament recalls to my mind the case of young Mitchell Holmes. Mitchell, when I knew him first, was a promising young man with a future before him in the Paterson Dyeing and Refining Company, of which my old friend, Alexander Paterson, was the president. He had many engaging qualities—among them an unquestioned ability to imitate a bulldog quarrelling with a Pekingese in a way which had to be heard to be believed. It was a gift which made him much in demand at social gatherings in the neighbourhood, marking him off from other young men who could only almost play the mandolin

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or recite bits of Gunga Din; and no doubt it was this talent of his which first sowed the seeds of love in the heart of Millicent Boyd. Women are essentially hero-worshippers, and when a warm-hearted girl like Millicent has heard a personable young man imitating a bulldog and a Pekingese to the applause of a crowded drawing-room, and has been able to detect the exact point at which the Pekingese leaves off and the bulldog begins, she can never feel quite the same to other men. In short, Mitchell and Millicent were engaged, and were only waiting to be married till the former could bite the Dyeing and Refining Company's ear for a bit of extra salary.

Mitchell Holmes had only one fault. He lost his temper when playing golf. He seldom played a round without becoming piqued, peeved, or—in many cases—chagrined. The caddies on our links, it was said, could always worst other small boys in verbal argument by calling them some of the things they had heard Mitchell call his ball on discovering it in a cuppy lie. He had a great gift of language, and he used it unsparingly. I will admit that there was some excuse for the man. He had the makings of a brilliant golfer, but a combination of bad luck and inconsistent play invariably robbed him of the fruits of his skill. He was the sort of player who does the first two holes in one under bogey and then takes an eleven at the third. The least thing upset him on the links. He missed short putts because of the uproar of the butterflies in the adjoining meadows.

It seemed hardly likely that this one kink in an otherwise admirable character would ever seriously affect his working or professional life, but it did. One evening, as I was sitting in my porch, reading Taylor on the push-shot, Alexander Paterson was announced. A glance at his face told me that he had come to ask my advice. Rightly or wrongly, he regarded me as one capable of giving advice. It was I who had changed the whole current of his life by counselling him to leave the wood in his bag and take a driving-iron off the tee; and in one or two other matters, like the choice of a putter (so much more important than the choice of a wife), I had been of assistance to him.

Alexander sat down and fanned himself with his hat, for the evening was warm. Perplexity was written upon his fine face.

"I don't know what to do," he said.

"Keep the head still—slow back—don't press," I said, gravely. There is no better rule for a happy and successful life.

He did not keep his head still. He shook it.

"It's nothing to do with golf this time," he said. "It's about the treasurership of my company. Old Smithers retires next week, and I've got to find a man to fill his place."

"That should be easy. You have simply to select the most deserving from among your other *employés*."

"But which *is* the most deserving? That's the point. There are two men who are capable of holding the job quite adequately. But then I realize how little I know of their real characters. It is the treasurership, you understand, which has to be filled. Now, a man who was quite good at another job might easily get wrong ideas into his head when he became a treasurer. He would have the handling of large sums of money. In other words, a man who in ordinary circumstances had never been conscious of any desire to visit the more distant portions of South America might feel the urge, so to speak, shortly after he became a treasurer. That is my difficulty. Of course, one always takes a sporting chance with any treasurer; but how am I to find out which of these two men would give me the more reasonable opportunity of keeping some of my money?"

I did not hesitate a moment. I held strong views on the subject of character-testing.

"The only way," I said to Alexander, "of really finding out a man's true character is to play golf with him. In no other walk of life does the cloven hoof so quickly display itself. I employed a lawyer for years, until one day I saw him kick his ball out of a heel-mark. I removed my business from his charge next morning. He has not yet run off with any trust-funds, but there is a nasty gleam in his eye, and I am convinced that it is only a question of time. Golf, my dear fellow, is the infallible test. The man who can go into a patch of rough alone, with the knowledge that only God is watching him, and play his ball where it lies, is the man who will serve you faithfully and well. The man who can smile bravely when his putt is diverted by one of those beastly worm-casts is pure gold right through. But the man who is hasty, unbalanced, and violent on the links will display the same qualities in the wider field of everyday life. You don't want an unbalanced treasurer, do you?"

"Not if his books are likely to catch the complaint."

"They are sure to. Statisticians estimate that the average of crime among good golfers is lower than in any class of the community except possibly bishops. Since Willie Park won the first championship at Prestwick in the year 1860 there has, I believe, been no instance of an Open Champion spending a day in prison. Whereas the bad golfers—

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"A PERSONABLE YOUNG MAN IMITATING A BULLDOG AND A PEKINGESE TO THE APPLAUSE OF A CROWDED DRAWING-ROOM."

and by bad I do not mean incompetent, but black-souled—the men who fail to count a stroke when they miss the globe: the men who never replace a divot: the men who talk while their opponent is driving: and the men who let their angry passions rise—these are in and out of Wormwood Scrubs all the time. They find it hardly worth while to get their hair cut in their brief intervals of liberty."

Alexander was visibly impressed.

"That sounds sensible, by George!" he said.

"It is sensible."

"I'll do it! Honestly, I can't see any other way of deciding between Holmes and Dixon."

I started.

"Holmes? Not Mitchell Holmes?"

"Yes. Of course you must know him? He lives here, I believe."

"And by Dixon do you mean Rupert Dixon?"

"That's the man. Another neighbour of yours."

I confess that my heart sank. It was as if my ball had fallen into the pit which my niblick had digged. I wished heartily that I had thought of waiting to ascertain the names of the two rivals before offering my scheme. I was extremely fond of Mitchell Holmes and of the girl to whom he was engaged to be married. Indeed, it was I who had sketched out a few rough notes for the lad to use when proposing: and results had shown that he had put my stuff in well. And I had listened many a time with a sympathetic ear to his hopes in the matter of securing a rise of salary which would enable him to get married. Somehow, when Alexander was talking, it had not occurred to me that young Holmes might be in the running for so important an office as the treasurership. Now, when it was too late, I perceived that I had been the unwitting means of laying him a stymie. I had ruined

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the boy's chances. Ordeal by golf was the one test which he could not possibly undergo with success. Only a miracle could keep him from losing his temper, and I had expressly warned Alexander against such a man.

When I thought of his rival my heart sank still more. Rupert Dixon was rather an unpleasant young man, but the worst of his enemies could not accuse him of not possessing the golfing temperament. From the drive off the tee to the holing of the final putt he was uniformly suave.

When Alexander had gone, I sat in thought for some time. I was faced with a problem. Strictly speaking, no doubt, I had no right to take sides: and, though secrecy had not been enjoined upon me in so many words, I was very well aware that Alexander was under the impression that I would keep the thing under my hat and not reveal to either party the test that awaited him. Each candidate was, of course, to remain ignorant that he was taking part in anything but a friendly game.

But when I thought of the young couple whose future depended on this ordeal, I hesitated no longer. I put on my hat and went round to Miss Boyd's house, where I knew that Mitchell was to be found at this hour.

The young couple were out in the porch, looking at the moon. They greeted me heartily, but their heartiness had rather a tinny sound, and I could see that on the whole they regarded me as one of those things which should not happen. But when I told my story their attitude changed. They began to look on me in the pleasanter light of a guardian, philosopher, and friend.

"Wherever did Mr. Paterson get such a silly idea?" said Miss Boyd, indignantly. I had—from the best motives—concealed the source of the scheme. "It's ridiculous!"

"Oh, I don't know," said Mitchell. "The old boy's crazy about golf. It's just the sort of scheme he would cook up. Well, it dishes *me!*"

"Oh, come!" I said.

"It's no good saying 'Oh, come!' You know perfectly well that I'm a frank, outspoken golfer. When my darned ball goes off nor'-nor'-east when I want it to go due west I can't help expressing an opinion about it. It is a curious phenomenon which calls for comment, and I give it. Similarly, when I top my drive, I have to go on record as saying that I did not do it intentionally. And it's just these trifles, as far as I can make out, that are going to decide the thing."

"Couldn't you learn to control yourself on the links, Mitchell darling?" asked Millicent. "After all, golf is only a game!"

Mitchell's eyes met mine, and I have no doubt that mine showed just the same look of horror which I saw in his. Women say these things without thinking. It does not mean that there is any kink in their character. They simply don't realize what they are saying.

"Hush!" said Mitchell, huskily, patting her hand and overcoming his emotion with a strong effort. "Hush, dearest!"

Two or three days later I met Millicent coming from the post-office. There was a new light of happiness in her eyes, and her face was glowing.

"Such a splendid thing has happened," she said. "After Mitchell left that night I happened to be glancing through a magazine, and I came across a wonderful advertisement. It began by saying that all the great men in history owed their success to being able to control themselves, and that Napoleon wouldn't have amounted to anything if he had not curbed his fiery nature, and then it said that we can all be like Napoleon if we fill in the accompanying blank order-form for Professor Orlando Rollitt's wonderful book, 'Are You Your Own Master?' absolutely free for five days and then seven shillings, but you must write at once because the demand is enormous and pretty soon it may be too late. I wrote at once, and luckily I was in time, because Professor Rollitt did have a copy left, and it's just arrived. I've been looking through it, and it seems splendid."

She held out a small volume. I glanced at it. There was a frontispiece showing a signed photograph of Professor Orlando Rollitt controlling himself in spite of having long white whiskers, and then some reading matter, printed between wide margins. One look at the book told me the professor's methods. To be brief, he had simply swiped Marcus Aurelius's best stuff, the copyright having expired some two thousand years ago, and was retailing it as his own. I did not mention this to Millicent. It was no affair of mine. Presumably, however obscure the necessity, Professor Rollitt had to live.

"I'm going to start Mitchell on it to-day. Don't you think this is good? 'Thou seest how few be the things which if a man has at his command his life flows gently on and is divine.' I think it will be wonderful if Mitchell's life flows gently on and is divine for seven shillings, don't you?"

At the club-house that evening I encountered Rupert Dixon. He was emerging from a shower-bath, and looked as pleased with himself as usual.

"Just been going round with old Paterson,"

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he said. "He was asking after you. He's gone back to town in his car."

I was thrilled. So the test had begun!

"How did you come out?" I asked.

Rupert Dixon smirked. A smirking man, wrapped in a bath towel, with a wisp of wet hair over one eye, is a repellent sight.

"Oh, pretty well. I won by six and five. In spite of having poisonous luck."

I felt a gleam of hope at these last words.

"Oh, you had bad luck?"

"The worst. I over-shot the green at the third with the best brassey-shot I've ever made in my life — and that's saying a lot—and lost my ball in the rough beyond it."

"And I suppose you let yourself go, eh?"

"Let myself go?"

"I take it that you made some sort of demonstration?"

"Oh, no. Losing your temper doesn't get you anywhere at golf. It only spoils your next shot."

I went away heavy-hearted. Dixon had plainly come through the ordeal as well as any man could have done. I expected to hear every day that the vacant treasurership had been filled, and that Mitchell had not even been called upon to play his test round. I suppose, however, that Alexander Paterson felt that it would be unfair to the other competitor not to give him his chance, for the next I heard of the matter was when Mitchell Holmes called me up on the Friday and asked me if I would accompany him round the links next day in the match he was playing with Alexander, and give him my moral support.

"I shall need it," he said. "I don't mind telling you I'm pretty nervous. I wish I had had longer to get the strangle-hold on that 'Are You Your Own Master?' stuff. I can see, of course, that it is the real tabasco from start to finish, and absolutely as mother makes it, but the trouble is I've only had a few days to soak it into my system. It's like trying to patch up a motor-car with string. You never know when the thing will break down. Heaven knows what will happen if I sink a ball at the water-hole. And something seems to tell me I am going to do it."

There was silence for a moment.

"Do you believe in dreams?" asked Mitchell.

"Believe in what?"

"Dreams."

"What about them?"

"I said, 'Do you believe in dreams?' Because last night I dreamed that I was playing in the final of the Open Championship, and I got into the rough, and there was a cow there, and suddenly — I never experienced anything so vivid—the cow looked at me in a sad sort of way and said, 'Why don't you use the two-V grip instead of the interlocking?' At the time it seemed an odd sort of thing to happen, but I've been thinking it over and I wonder if there isn't something in it. These things must be sent to us for a purpose."



"RUPERT DIXON SMIRKED. A SMIRKING MAN, WRAPPED IN A BATH TOWEL, WITH A WISP OF WET HAIR OVER ONE EYE, IS A REPELLENT SIGHT."

"You can't change your grip on the day of an important match."

"I suppose not. The fact is, I'm a bit jumpy, or I wouldn't have mentioned it. Oh, well! See you to-morrow at two."

The day was bright and sunny, but a tricky cross-wind was blowing when I reached the club-house. Alexander Paterson was there, practising swings on the first tee: and almost immediately Mitchell Holmes arrived, accompanied by Millicent.

"Perhaps," said Alexander, "we had better be getting under way. Shall I take the honour?"

"Certainly," said Mitchell.

Alexander teed up his ball.

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Alexander Paterson has always been a careful rather than a dashing player. It is his custom, a sort of ritual, to take two measured practice-swings before addressing the ball, even on the putting-green. When he does address the ball he shuffles his feet for a moment or two, then pauses, and scans the horizon in a suspicious sort of way, as if he had been expecting it to play some sort of a trick on him when he was not looking. A careful inspection seems to convince him of the horizon's *bona fides*, and he turns his attention to the ball again. He shuffles his feet once more, then raises his club. He waggles the club smartly over the ball three times, then lays it behind the globule. At this point he suddenly peers at the horizon again, in the apparent hope of catching it off its guard. This done, he raises his club very slowly, brings it back very slowly till it almost touches the ball, raises it again, brings it down again, raises it once more, and brings it down for the third time. He then stands motionless, wrapped in thought, like some Indian fakir contemplating the infinite. Then he raises his club again and replaces it behind the ball. Finally he quivers all over, swings very slowly back, and drives the ball for about a hundred and fifty yards in a dead straight line.

It is a method of procedure which proves sometimes a little exasperating to the highly strung, and I watched Mitchell's face anxiously to see how he was taking his first introduction to it. The unhappy lad had blenched visibly. He turned to me with the air of one in pain.

"Does he always do that?" he whispered.

"Always," I replied.

"Then I'm done for! No human being could play golf against a one-ring circus like that without blowing up!"

I said nothing. It was, I feared, only too true. Well-poised as I am, I had long since been compelled to give up playing with Alexander Paterson, much as I esteemed him. It was a choice between that and resigning from the Baptist Church.

At this moment Millicent spoke. There was an open book in her hand. I recognized it as the life-work of Professor Rollitt.

"Think on this doctrine," she said, in her soft, modulated voice, "that to be patient is a branch of justice, and that men sin without intending it."

Mitchell nodded briefly, and walked to the tee with a firm step.

"Before you drive, darling," said Millicent, "remember this. Let no act be done at haphazard, nor otherwise than according to the finished rules that govern its kind."

The next moment Mitchell's ball was shooting through the air, to come to rest two hundred yards down the course. It was a magnificent drive. He had followed the counsel of Marcus Aurelius to the letter.

An admirable iron-shot put him in reasonable proximity to the pin, and he holed out in one under bogey with one of the nicest putts I have ever beheld. And when at the next hole, the dangerous water-hole, his ball soared over the pond and lay safe, giving him bogey for the hole, I began for the first time to breathe freely. Every golfer has his day, and this was plainly Mitchell's. He was playing faultless golf. If he could continue in this vein, his unfortunate failing would have no chance to show itself.

The third hole is long and tricky. You drive over a ravine—or possibly into it. In the latter event you breathe a prayer and call for your niblick. But, once over the ravine, there is nothing to disturb the equanimity. Bogey is five, and a good drive, followed by a brassey-shot, will put you within easy mashie-distance of the green.

Mitchell cleared the ravine by a hundred and twenty yards. He strolled back to me, and watched Alexander go through his ritual with an indulgent smile. I knew just how he was feeling. Never does the world seem so sweet and fair and the foibles of our fellow human beings so little irritating as when we have just swatted the pill right on the spot where it does most good.

"I can't see why he does it," said Mitchell, eyeing Alexander with a toleration that almost amounted to affection. "If I did all those Swedish exercises before I drove, I should forget what I had come out for and go home." Alexander concluded the movements, and landed a bare three yards on the other side of the ravine. "He's what you would call a steady performer, isn't he? Never varies!"

Mitchell won the hole comfortably. There was a jauntiness about his stance on the fourth tee which made me a little uneasy. Over-confidence at golf is almost as bad as timidity.

My apprehensions were justified. Mitchell topped his ball. It rolled twenty yards into the rough, and nestled under a dock-leaf. His mouth opened, then closed with a snap. He came over to where Millicent and I were standing.

"I didn't say it!" he said. "What on earth happened then?"

"Search men's governing principles," said Millicent, "and consider the wise, what they shun and what they cleave to."

"Exactly," I said. "You swayed your body."

"And now I've got to go and look for that infernal ball."

"Never mind, darling," said Millicent.

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"Nothing has such power to broaden the mind as the ability to investigate systematically and truly all that comes under thy observation in life."

"Besides," I said, "you're three up."

"I sha'n't be after this hole."

He was right. Alexander won it in five, one above bogey, and regained the honour.

Mitchell was a trifle shaken. His play no longer had its first careless vigour. He lost the next hole, halved the sixth, lost the short seventh, and then, rallying, halved the eighth.



"'WHY ON EARTH DON'T THEY MOW THIS DARNED STUFF?' DEMANDED MITCHELL, AS HE BEAT ABOUT THE GRASS WITH HIS NIBLICK."

The ninth hole, like so many on our links, can be a perfectly simple four, although the rolling nature of the green makes bogey always a somewhat doubtful feat; but, on the other hand, if you foozle your drive, you can easily achieve double figures. The tee is on the farther side of the pond, beyond the bridge, where the water narrows almost to the dimensions of a brook. You drive across this water and over a tangle of trees and undergrowth on the other bank. The distance to the fairway cannot be more than sixty yards, for the hazard is purely a mental one, and yet how many fair hopes have been wrecked there!

Alexander cleared the obstacles comfortably with his customary short, straight drive, and Mitchell advanced to the tee.

I think the loss of the honour had been preying on his mind. He seemed nervous. His up-swing was shaky, and he swayed back perceptibly. He made a lunge at the ball, sliced it, and it struck a tree on the other side of the water and fell in the long grass. We crossed the bridge to look for it: and it was here that the effect of Professor Rollitt began definitely to wane.

"Why on earth don't they mow this darned stuff?" demanded Mitchell, querulously, as he beat about the grass with his niblick.

"You have to have rough on a course," I ventured.

"Whatever happens at all," said Millicent, "happens as it should. Thou wilt find this true if thou shouldst watch narrowly."

"That's all very well," said Mitchell, watching narrowly in a clump of weeds but seeming unconvinced. "I believe the Greens Committee run this darned club purely in the interests of the caddies. I believe they encourage lost balls, and go halves with the little beasts when they find them and sell them!"

Millicent and I exchanged glances. There were tears in her eyes.

"Oh, Mitchell! Remember Napoleon!"

"Napoleon! What's Napoleon got to do with it? Napoleon never was expected to drive through a primeval forest! Besides, what did Napoleon ever do? Where did Napoleon get off, swanking round as if he amounted to something? Poor fish! All he ever did was to get hammered at Waterloo!"

Alexander rejoined us. He had walked on to where his ball lay.

"Can't find it, eh? Nasty bit of rough, this!"

"No, I can't find it. But to-morrow some

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miserable, chinless, half-witted reptile of a caddie with pop eyes and eight hundred and thirty-seven pimples will find it, and will sell it to someone for sixpence! No, it was a brand-new ball. He'll probably get a shilling for it. That'll be sixpence for himself and sixpence for the Greens Committee! No wonder they're buying cars quicker than the makers can supply them! No wonder you see their wives going about in mink coats and pearl necklaces! Oh, darn it! I'll drop another!"

"In that case," Alexander pointed out, "you will, of course, under the rules governing match-play, lose the hole."

"All right, then. I'll give up the hole."

"Then that, I think, makes me one up on the first nine," said Alexander. "Excellent! A very pleasant, even game!"

"Pleasant! On second thoughts I don't believe the Greens Committee let the wretched caddies get any of the loot. They hang round behind trees till the deal's concluded, and then sneak out and choke it out of them!"

I saw Alexander raise his eyebrows. He walked up the hill to the next tee with me.

"Rather a quick-tempered young fellow, Holmes!" he said, thoughtfully. "I should never have suspected it. It just shows how little one can know of a man, only meeting him in business hours."

I tried to defend the poor lad.

"He has an excellent heart, Alexander. But the fact is—we are such old friends that I know you will forgive my mentioning it—your style of play gets, I fancy, a little on his nerves."

"My style of play? What's wrong with my style of play?"

"Nothing is actually wrong with it, but to a young and ardent spirit there is apt to be something a trifle upsetting in being compelled to watch a man play quite so slowly as you do. Come now, Alexander, as one friend to another, is it necessary to take two practice-swings before you putt?"

"Dear, dear!" said Alexander. "You really mean to say that that upsets him? Well, I'm afraid I am too old to change my methods now."

I had nothing more to say.

As we reached the tenth tee, I saw that we were in for a few minutes' wait. Suddenly I felt a hand on my arm. Millicent was standing beside me, dejection written on her face. Alexander and young Mitchell were some distance away from us.

"Mitchell doesn't want me to come round the rest of the way with him," she said, despondently. "He says I make him nervous."

I shook my head.

"That's bad! I was looking on you as a steadying influence."

"I thought I was, too. But Mitchell says no. He says my being there keeps him from concentrating."

"Then perhaps it would be better for you to remain in the club-house till we return. There is, I fear, dirty work ahead."

A choking sob escaped the unhappy girl.

"I'm afraid so. There is an apple tree near the thirteenth hole, and Mitchell's caddie is sure to start eating apples. I am thinking of what Mitchell will do when he hears the crunching when he is addressing his ball."

"That is true."

"Our only hope," she said, holding out Professor Rollitt's book, "is this. Will you please read him extracts when you see him getting nervous? We went through the book last night and marked all the passages in blue pencil which might prove helpful. You will see notes against them in the margin, showing when each is supposed to be used."

It was a small favour to ask. I took the book and gripped her hand silently. Then I joined Alexander and Mitchell on the tenth tee. Mitchell was still continuing his speculations regarding the Greens Committee.

"The hole after this one," he said, "used to be a short hole. There was no chance of losing a ball. Then, one day, the wife of one of the Greens Committee happened to mention that the baby needed new shoes, so now they've tacked on another hundred and fifty yards to it. You have to drive over the brow of a hill, and if you slice an eighth of an inch you get into a sort of No Man's Land, full of rocks and bushes and crevices and old pots and pans. The Greens Committee practically live there in summer. You see them prowling round in groups, encouraging each other with merry cries as they fill their sacks. Well, I'm going to fool them to-day. I'm going to drive an old ball which is just hanging together by a thread. It'll come to pieces when they pick it up!"

Golf, however, is a curious game—a game of fluctuations. One might have supposed that Mitchell, in such a frame of mind, would have continued to come to grief. But at the beginning of the second nine he once more found his form. A perfect drive put him in position to reach the tenth green with an iron-shot, and, though the ball was several yards from the hole, he laid it dead with his approach-putt and holed his second for a bogey four. Alexander could only achieve a five, so that they were all square again.

The eleventh, the subject of Mitchell's recent criticism, is certainly a tricky hole, and it is true that a slice does land the

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player in grave difficulties. To-day, however, both men kept their drives straight, and found no difficulty in securing fours.

"A little more of this," said Mitchell, beaming, "and the Greens Committee will have to give up piracy and go back to work."

The twelfth is a long, dog-leg hole, bogey five. Alexander plugged steadily round the bend, holing out in six, and Mitchell, whose second shot had landed him in some long grass, was obliged to use the niblick. He contrived, however, to halve the hole with a nicely-judged mashie-shot to the edge of the green.

Alexander won the thirteenth. It is a three hundred and sixty yard hole, free from bunkers. It took Alexander three strokes to reach the green, but his third laid the ball dead; while Mitchell, who was on in two, required three putts.

"That reminds me," said Alexander, chattily, "of a story I heard. Friend calls out to a beginner, 'How are you getting on, old man?' and the beginner says 'Splendidly. I just made three perfect putts on the last green!'"

Mitchell did not appear amused. I watched his face anxiously. He had made no remark, but the missed putt which would have saved the hole had been very short, and I feared the worst. There was a brooding look in his eye as we walked to the fourteenth tee.

There are few more picturesque spots in the whole of the countryside than the neighbourhood of the fourteenth tee. It is a sight to charm the nature-lover's heart.

But, if golf has a defect, it is that it prevents a man being a whole-hearted lover of nature. Where the layman sees waving grass and romantic tangles of undergrowth, your golfer beholds nothing but a nasty patch of rough from which he must divert his ball. The cry of the birds, wheeling against the sky, is to the golfer merely something that may put him off his putt. As a spectator, I am fond of the ravine at the bottom of the slope. It pleases the eye. But, as a golfer, I have frequently found it the very devil.

The last hole had given Alexander the honour again. He drove even more deliberately than before. For quite half a minute he stood over his ball, pawing at it with his driving-iron like a cat investigating a tortoise. Finally he dispatched it to one of the few safe spots on the hillside. The drive from this tee has to be carefully calculated, for, if it be too straight, it will catch the slope and roll down into the ravine.

Mitchell addressed his ball. He swung up, and then, just as he was beginning his down-swing, from immediately behind him came a sudden sharp crunching sound. I looked quickly in the direction whence it came. Mitchell's caddie, with a glassy look in his eyes, was gnawing a large apple. And even as I breathed a silent prayer, down came the driver, and the ball, with a terrible slice on it, hit the side of the hill and bounded into the ravine.

There was a pause—a pause in which the world stood still. Mitchell dropped his club and turned. His face was working horribly.

"Mitchell!" I cried. "My boy! Reflect! Be calm!"

"Calm! What's the use of being calm when people are chewing apples in thousands all round you? What *is* this, anyway—a golf match or a pleasant day's outing for the children of the poor? Apples! Go on, my boy, take another bite! Take several! Enjoy yourself! Never mind if it seems to cause me a fleeting annoyance! Go on with your lunch! You probably had a light breakfast, eh, and are feeling a little peckish, yes? If you will wait here, I will run to the club-house and get you a sandwich and a bottle of ginger-ale. Make yourself quite at home, you lovable little fellow! Sit down and have a good time!"

I turned the pages of Professor Rollitt's book feverishly. I could not find a passage that had been marked in blue pencil to meet this emergency. I selected one at random.

"Mitchell," I said, "one moment! How much time he gains who does not look to see what his neighbour says or does, but only at what he does himself, to make it just and holy."

"Well, look what I've done myself! I'm somewhere down at the bottom of that darned ravine, and it'll take me a dozen strokes to get out. Do you call that just and holy? Here, give me that book for a moment!"

He snatched the little volume out of my hands. For an instant he looked at it with a curious expression of loathing, then he placed it gently on the ground and jumped on it a few times. Then he hit it with his driver. Finally, as if feeling that the time for half measures had passed, he took a little run and kicked it strongly into the long grass.

He turned to Alexander, who had been an impassive spectator of the scene.

"I'm through!" he said. "I concede the match. Good-bye! You'll find me in the bay!"

"Going swimming?"

"No. Drowning myself!"

A gentle smile broke out over my old friend's usually grave face. He patted Mitchell's shoulder affectionately.

"Don't do that, my boy," he said. "I

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"HE SNATCHED THE LITTLE VOLUME OUT OF MY HANDS, LOOKED AT IT WITH A CURIOUS EXPRESSION OF LOATHING, PLACED IT GENTLY ON THE GROUND, AND JUMPED ON IT A FEW TIMES."

was hoping you would stick around the office awhile as treasurer of the company."

Mitchell tottered. He grasped my arm for support. Everything was very still. Nothing broke the stillness but the humming of the bees, the murmur of the distant wavelets, and the sound of Mitchell's caddie going on with his apple.

"What!" cried Mitchell.

"The position," said Alexander, "will be falling vacant very shortly, as no doubt you know. It is yours, if you care to accept it."

"You mean—you mean—you're going to give me the job?"

"Certainly. You have interpreted me exactly."

Mitchell gulped. So did his caddie. One from a spiritual, the other from a physical cause.

"If you don't mind excusing me," said Mitchell, huskily, "I think I'll be popping back to the club-house. Someone I want to see."

He disappeared through the trees, running strongly. I turned to Alexander.

"What does this mean?" I asked. "I am delighted, but what becomes of the test?"

My old friend smiled gently.

"The test," he replied, "has been eminently satisfactory. Circumstances, perhaps, have compelled me to modify the original idea of it, but nevertheless it has been a completely successful test. Since we started out, I have been doing a good deal of thinking, and I have come to the conclusion that what the Paterson Dyeing and Refining Company really needs is a treasurer whom I can beat at golf. And I have discovered the ideal man. Why," he went on, a look of holy enthusiasm on his fine old face, "do you realize that I can always lick the stuffing out of that boy, good player as he is, simply by taking a little trouble? I can make him get the wind up every time, simply by taking one or two extra practice-swings! That is the sort of man I need for a responsible post in my office."

"But what about Rupert Dixon?" I asked.

He gave a gesture of distaste.

"I wouldn't trust that man. Why, when I played with him, everything went wrong, and he just smiled and didn't say a word. A man who can do that is not the man to trust with the control of large sums of money. It wouldn't be safe. Why, the fellow isn't honest! He can't be!" He paused for a moment. "Besides," he added, thoughtfully, "he beat me by six and five. What's the good of a treasurer who beats the boss by six and five?"

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"THE UNCROWNED KING OF ARABIA"

COLONEL T·E·LAWRENCE

THE MOST ROMANTIC CAREER OF MODERN TIMES.

By Lowell Thomas

II.

In this second instalment Mr. Lowell Thomas, the only civilian correspondent who witnessed the reclaiming of the Holy Land, continues his amazing life-story of Col. T. E. Lawrence, the Oxford scholar who became a soldier and raised an army of 200,000 wild Bedouins to sweep the Turk from the fettered land.

ARCHÆOLOGIST TURNED TRAIN-WRECKER.

FATE never played a stranger prank than when she transformed Thomas Lawrence, the retiring young Oxford graduate, from a studious archæologist into the world's champion train-wrecker, the leader of a hundred thrilling raids, commander of an army, creator of princes, and terror of Turks and Germans.

One day we were trekking along the Wady Ithm. Behind us were three thousand Bedouins mounted on the fleetest racing camels ever brought down the Nejd. The Bedouins were improvising strange war-songs describing the deeds of Shereef Lawrence, Prince of Mecca, the youthful English archæologist who had just made himself the uncrowned king of Arabia. Lawrence and I were riding at the head of the column. He paid no attention to the song, lauding him as a modern Abu Bekr. We were discussing the possibility of ancient Hittite civilization forming the connecting link between the civilizations of Babylon and Nineveh and Ancient Crete. Suddenly he broke off to remark: "Do you know, one of the most glorious sights I have ever seen is a trainload of Turkish soldiers going up in the air, after the explosion of a mine?"



COLONEL T. E. LAWRENCE,

DRESSED AS AN ARAB SHEREEF AND WEARING THE SHORT, CURVED GOLD SWORD OF A PRINCE OF MECCA.

I suggested to Lawrence that it would be a good idea for him to arrange a little dynamiting party for my benefit. Three days later we started off at night with two hundred Howeitat in the direction of the Pilgrim Railway. After two days' hard riding across a country more barren than the mountains of the moon and through valleys that would make Death Valley look like an oasis, we reached some low hills a few miles from Maan. At a signal from Lawrence we all dismounted.

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Leaving the camels, we walked up to the summit of the nearest hill and from between sandstone cliffs we looked down across the track of the railway.

This railway had been built some years before by the Turkish Government in order to keep a closer hand on Arabia through transport of troops, as well as to furnish transportation for pilgrims to Medina and Mecca. Medina was garrisoned by an army of over twenty thousand Turks and was very strongly fortified. Lawrence and his Arabs could have cut the railway line at any time, but they preferred not to. Trainload after trainload of supplies and ammunition must be sent down to Medina over that railway. Whenever Lawrence and his Arabs ran out of food or ammunition they had a quaint little habit of blowing up a train or two, raiding it, and disappearing into the blue with everything that had been so thoughtfully sent down from Constantinople.

I discovered that Lawrence knew as much about the handling of high explosives as he did about archæology, and that he took great pride in his ability as a dynamiter. The Bedouins, on the other hand, were entirely ignorant of how to use dynamite; and so Lawrence nearly always planted all his own mines, and took the Bedouins along with him merely for company and to help to carry off the loot. He had blown up so many trains that he knew the Turkish system of transportation and patrols as well as the Turks did themselves.

LAWRENCE AND HIS "TULIPS."

Lawrence dynamited Turkish trains passing along the Hejaz Railway with such regularity that seats in the rear carriage sold for five and six times their normal value in Damascus. There was always a wild scramble for seats at the rear end of the trains because Lawrence nearly always touched off his "tulips" under the engine, and the only carriages damaged were those in front.

There were two important reasons why Lawrence preferred not to instruct the Arabs in the use of high explosives. First of all he was afraid that the Bedouins would keep on playfully blowing up trains even after the termination of the war, because they looked upon it as the greatest sport they had ever discovered. His second reason was because it was extremely dangerous to leave footmarks along the railway line, and he preferred not to delegate tulip-planting to men who might be careless.

In 1917 Lawrence and his aids blew up twenty-five Turkish trains, and during the eighteen months that he led the Arabs he dynamited seventy-nine trains and bridges in all. It is a remarkable fact that he only participated in one such expedition which turned out unsatisfactorily.

Near Deraa, the important railway junction south of Damascus, Lawrence touched off one of his tulips under the driving-wheels of a particularly long and heavily-armed train. It turned out that Djemal Pasha, the commander-in-chief of the Turkish armies, was on board with one thousand troops. Djemal hopped out of his saloon and, followed by all his staff, jumped into a ditch. Lawrence only had sixty Bedouins with him, but all were members of his personal bodyguard and famous fighters. In spite of the overwhelming odds, the young Englishman and his Arabs fought a pitched battle in which one hundred and twenty-five Turks were killed and Lawrence lost a third of his own force. The remainder of the Turks finally rallied around the ircommander-in-chief, and Lawrence and his Arabs had to show their heels.

We crouched behind great chunks of sandstone for eight hours until a number of patrols had passed by. Lawrence satisfied himself that they were going along at intervals of every two hours. At midday, while the Turks were having their siesta, Lawrence slipped down to the railway line and, walking a short distance on the sleepers in his bare feet in order not to leave any impression on the ground which might be seen by the Turks, picked out what he considered a proper spot for planting a charge. Whenever he merely wanted to derail the engine of a train, he would use only a pound of blasting gelatine; when he wanted to blow it up, he would use from forty to fifty pounds. On this occasion, in order that no one might be disappointed, he used slightly over fifty pounds. It took him a little over an hour to dig a hole between the sleepers, bury the explosive, and run a fine wire underneath the rail and down the embankment and up the hillside.

THE ART OF MINE-LAYING.

Laying a mine is a rather long and tedious task. First Lawrence took off a top layer of railway ballast, which he placed in a bag which he carried under his cloak for that purpose. Next he took out enough earth and rock to fill two five-gallon petrol tins. This latter material he carried off to a distance of some fifty yards from the track and scattered along so it would not be noticed by the Turkish patrols. After filling the cavity with his fifty-pound "tulip seed" of dynamite, he put the surface layer of ballast back in place and levelled it off with his hand. As a last precaution he took a camel's-hair brush, swept the ground smooth, and then in order not to leave a foot-print walked

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backwards down the track for twenty yards, carefully removing all trace of his tracks with the brush. He buried the wire for a distance of two hundred yards up the side of the hill, and then calmly sat down under a bush right out in the open and waited in leisurely fashion. The guards on top of the cars of the first train that came along, and in front of the engine, who were always stationed there with their rifles loaded, saw nothing more extraordinary than a lone Bedouin sitting on the hillside with a shepherd's staff in his hand. Lawrence allowed the front wheels of the engine to pass over the mine and then, as we lay there half paralyzed behind the boulders, he sent the current into the gelatine, which exploded with a roar like the falling of a six-storey building. An enormous black cloud of smoke and dust went up. With a clanking and clattering of iron the engine rose from the track. It broke squarely in two, the boiler exploded, and chunks of iron and steel showered the country for a radius of three hundred yards. Numerous bits of boiler-plate missed Lawrence by inches.



THE SCENE OF LAWRENCE'S MINE-LAYING EXPLOITS.

COLONEL LAWRENCE BLEW UP SEVENTY-NINE BRIDGES AND TRAINS ALONG THIS RAILWAY, WHICH CROSSES THE ARABIAN DESERT FROM DAMASCUS TO MEDINA. HE IS UNQUESTIONABLY THE MOST DEVASTATING DYNAMITER AND TRAIN-WRECKER IN ALL HISTORY.

Instead of provisions, this train carried some four hundred Turkish soldiers on their way to the relief of Medina. They swarmed out of the coaches and started in a menacing manner toward Lawrence. All this time the Bedouins lining the top of the hill were popping at the Turks. Evidently one Turkish officer recognized that the lone Arab was the mysterious Englishman for whom rewards up to one hundred thousand pounds had been offered. He shouted something and the men, instead of shooting, ran toward Lawrence as though expecting to take him prisoner. He allowed them to get within a few yards and then, with a speed that would have made an Arizona gunman green with envy, whipped his long-barrelled Colt's revolver from the folds of his gown and shot six of the Turks in their tracks. He always carried this heavy American-frontier model revolver. Although very few persons ever saw him at it, it was well known among the British officers that he spent hundreds of hours at target practice, and as a result had made himself an almost perfect shot.

About fifty of the Turks dodged behind the embankment and started shooting at us through the carriage wheels. But Lawrence had posted two Lewis machine-guns just around a curve in the track, where they covered the opposite side of the railway embankment behind which the Turks had taken refuge. The gun crews opened fire, and before the Turks knew what had happened their line was raked from end to end and every man behind the embankment was either killed or wounded. They hadn't a chance. Then the rest of the Turks on the train, panic-stricken, fled in all directions.

DIVIDING THE LOOT.

The Arabs, who were crouching behind the rocks popping away with their rifles, charged down on the train, tore open the carriages, and began throwing out everything on board that wasn't nailed down. The loot consisted of considerable money, and many beautiful carpets and draperies which the Turks had taken from the private houses of wealthy Arabs in Medina. The Bedouins piled all the loot along the embankment and divided it up among themselves. Occasionally two men would want the same Persian rug and start fighting over it. In such instances Lawrence would step in between them and turn the rug over to some third man.

So famous did this young archæologist become throughout the Near East as a dynamiter of bridges and trains that after the final defeat of the Turkish armies, when word reached Cairo that Lawrence would soon be passing through Egypt *en route* to Paris, General Watson, G.O.C. of troops, jocularly announced that he was going to detail a special detachment to guard "Kasr-el-Nil," the great bridge across the Nile from Cairo to Gezireh. It had been rumoured that Lawrence was dissatisfied at having finished up the campaign with the odd number of

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seventy-nine mine-laying parties to his credit. So the story spread up and down along the route of Allenby's "Milk and Honey" Railway between Egypt and Palestine that Lawrence proposed to make it an even eighty, and wind up his career as a dynamiter in an appropriate manner by planting a few farewell "tulips" under "Kasr-el-Nil."

At every station along the Hejaz-Pilgrim Railway there are one or two bells which the Turkish officials rang as a warning to passengers that the train was ready to start. Nearly all of them are now at the Arab bureau in Cairo. Along with them are a dozen or more from Turkish mile-posts and the number-plates from half the engines which formerly hauled trains over the line from Damascus to Medina. Lawrence and his associates collected these in order to confirm their victories. I often heard the remark while in Arabia that Lawrence would capture a Turkish post along the railway merely to get the bells. And it was no uncommon thing to see Lawrence, or one of his officers, making their way stealthily along the railway embankment, between patrols, searching for the iron post marking kilo 1,000 south of Damascus. Once found, they would cut it off with a "tulip bud"—a stick of dynamite.

Lawrence usually spent his time blowing up trains when he was not engaged in a major movement against the Turks or in mobilizing the Bedouin.

BUILDING UP AN ARMY.

When he first arrived in Arabia in company with Sir Ronald Storrs, on a mission to Jeddah from the High Commissioner of Egypt, Shereef Hussein had just captured the Holy City of Mecca, and the revolution not only was at a standstill but the Turks were rapidly advancing to retake Mecca. At that time Lawrence had no definite plan in mind, but with the permission of the aged Shereef he journeyed into the interior to the camp of Emir Feisal, the third son of the Shereef of Mecca, who was in command of the largest Arab force. With Feisal was an army of five thousand men, but it had lost heart. He confessed to Lawrence that things were in a mess and the future looked dark.

After Lawrence had looked over the Emir's scraggly army he made up his mind that, with this force as a nucleus, it should be possible to build up a large irregular army which would have a great advantage over the Turks at desert fighting, and which would worry the enemy considerably. He therefore announced to Emir Feisal that his troops would be in Damascus within a year.

"If Allah wills," said the latter, with a dubious smile, as he stroked his beard and gazed vacantly out of the flap of his tent at his disheartened followers lolling in the shade of the date palms. That was in October, 1916, and by June, 1917, this lad, not yet out of his twenties, had raised an irregular army of some fifty thousand Bedouins, and although his prophecy did not quite come true, he nevertheless led the Arab forces through the gates of Damascus within a year and a half from the time he joined Emir Feisal.

First he marched his men seven hundred miles across the desert, and along the coast of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Akaba. From time to time he would attack a Turkish garrison at one of the towns on the coast. He maintained a perfect liaison with the British cruisers in the Red Sea, and whenever he made an attack from the land, the British Navy would open hostilities by shelling the Turks heavily for a few hours in advance, whereupon Lawrence and his Bedouins would sweep down and finish the job. He succeeded by this method in capturing the important seacoast towns of Yambu and Wijh.

The entry into Yambu, the port of call for that part of west-central Arabia in which Medina is the important city, was described to me as splendid and barbaric. Emir Feisal, as the official commander-in-chief of the Arabian army, rode in front, dressed in robes as white as the snows of Lebanon. On his right rode another Shereef garbed in dark red, his head-cloth, tunic, and cloak dyed with henna. On Prince Feisal's left rode "Shereef" Lawrence, in pure white robes, looking like the reincarnation of a prophet of old. Behind them were Bedouins carrying three banners of purple silk, topped with gold spikes, and followed by three drummers playing a weird march. Behind them came a wild bouncing mass of thousands of Arabs on camels, all members of Feisal's and Lawrence's bodyguard. They were packed together in a dense, billowy mass, the men wearing robes of every colour, and their camels covered with equally brilliant trappings. All were singing at the top of their voices, improvising verses descriptive of the virtues of the Emir and their fair-haired young English leader.

HELP FROM THE NAVY.

The capture of El-Wijh took place on January 25th, 1917. Wijh stands at the south-western corner of a small corraline plateau, bounded on the west by the sea, on the south by a wady, and on the east by an inland plain. The British warships bombarded the Turks out of their main fortress by firing at a distance of fourteen thousand yards, which made it possible for them to keep far outside the range of the Turkish guns. The day before the city fell Lawrence

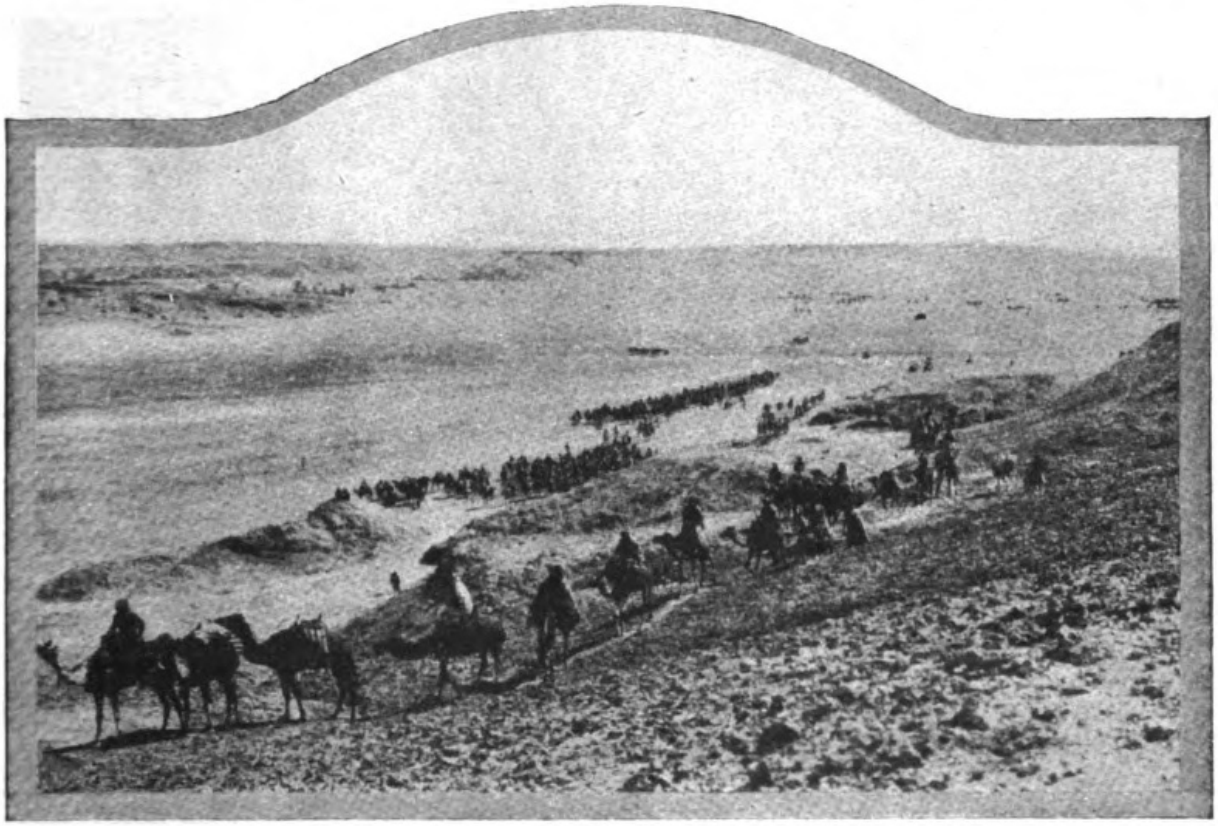
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led his Arabs right into the heart of El-Wijh, subjecting himself and his men to the shells from the battleships, and fought the Turks in a hand-to-hand battle in the streets.

Admiral Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, who at that time was in command of the naval forces in Egypt and the East Indies, directed the sea attack on El-Wijh in person. To use the Arab phrase, Admiral Wemyss was the "father and mother" of the Arabian Revolution during its early stages, and owing to the alleged rather indifferent attitude taken toward it by the Army High Command in Egypt until Allenby arrived, he deserves much of the credit for the success of Lawrence and his Arabs up to the time when he was called to London and made First Sea Lord. Whenever Lawrence wanted to make a demonstration, or "stage a cinema show," as he described it, to impress the rather restive Arabs, he would simply get in touch with Admiral Wemyss, and the latter would steam down from Suez in his huge flagship the *Euryalus* and engage in a little target practice with his nine-inch guns along the Arabian coast within sight of the Shereefian army. On two occasions the Admiral anchored the *Euryalus* in the harbour at Jeddah and called on King Hussein. No doubt the mammoth size of the Admiral's flagship was partly responsible for the impression which the King had of Great Britain's unlimited power.

"She is the great sea in which I, the fish, swim," the aged Arabian ruler remarked on one occasion. "And the larger the sea, the fatter the fish."

It was by the process of accretion that Lawrence built up his army. He and his few companions, after leaving the Mecca country, stopped at every Arab village and nomad encampment in the desert on their way north. In his masterly and convincing manner, Lawrence would call the Arab sheiks together and explain that the Turks were so busy fighting the British, French, Italians, and others, that they could not possibly devote the full force of their energies to Arabia.



AN ARAB ARMY ON THE MARCH.

LAWRENCE AND HIS IRREGULAR ARAB ARMY ON THEIR WAY ACROSS THE DESERT TO ATTACK THE TURKS AT EL-WIJH, AN IMPORTANT PORT ON THE RED SEA. EMIR FEISAL AND EMIR LAWRENCE RODE AT THE HEAD OF THE COLUMN, DRESSED IN PURE WHITE.

LAWRENCE'S GREATEST PROBLEM.

The fact that Lawrence was accompanied by Emir Feisal, the most popular of Shereef Hussein's sons, assured him of the heartiest possible welcome wherever he went. He would sit round the camp fires with the Arabs discussing the past greatness of Arabia and her present condition of

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A STOKES-MORTAR CLASS IN ARABIA.

COLONEL LAWRENCE IS STANDING IN THE CENTRE OF THE GROUP, WITH A PROJECTILE IN HIS HANDS. TO THE LEFT IS THE FLAGSHIP OF ADMIRAL SIR ROSSLYN WEMYSS, WHICH BOMBARDED THE TURKISH FORTS ON THE RED SEA WHEN LAWRENCE AND HIS ARABS CHARGED DOWN ON THEM FROM THE DESERT.

servitude, until he had every member of the tribe worked up to a high pitch of frenzy. Over cups of sweetened tea and roasted goat killed in his honour, in faultless Arabic he would discuss with the Arabs the possibility of their being able to drive out the Turks. The decision, however, was usually left to the leading sheik of the tribe. But Lawrence's greatest problem was that of convincing the Arabs of one tribe that they should renounce their blood-feud with the members of another tribe and unite against their common enemy, the Turks. That he succeeded in an astonishing and incredible way is demonstrated by the fact that within less than a year he had loosely united most of the peoples of holy Arabia. The first three tribes which he brought together were the Harb, inhabiting the desert regions between Medina and Mecca; the Juheina, inhabiting the country between Yambu on the Red Sea coast and Medina in the interior; and the Billi tribe, near Wijh. The first of these, including over two hundred thousand people, is one of the largest tribes in all Arabia.

After he had captured both Yambu and Wijh, where large Turkish garrisons were stationed, Lawrence moved north toward Akaba and Maan. There he came in contact with the Beni Atiyeh, obtaining from them some three thousand five hundred fighting men. The Beni Atiyeh are true Bedouins who know nothing about the cultivation of land and whose only animals are camels.

In northern holy Arabia near the head of the Gulf of Akaba the Turks had many strong garrisons. Before the Arabs could hope to sweep their oppressors out of the Hejaz, the problem of overcoming those garrisons faced them. With the Turks driven from the Hejaz, Lawrence knew it would then be possible for the Arabs to join in an invasion of Syria. Of all points in that region the most important was Akaba, the ancient seaport of King Solomon, because Akaba was the only seaport in that section of Arabia, and was the best possible place to use as a base for an invasion of Syria, in co-operation with Allenby's programme.

On June 18th, 1917, with about eight hundred Bedouins of the Toweiha tribe, two hundred of the Sherarat, and ninety of the Kawachiba, Lawrence set out for the head of the Gulf of Akaba. He left two hundred picked men on guard over the tribal tents in the Wady Sirhan, because it is customary in Arabia for wandering bands of nomads to sweep down on camps and carry off everything in sight, provided they are not sufficiently protected. The passion for looting is one of the cardinal sins in Arabia.

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TAKING THE TURKS BY SURPRISE.

As an illustration of how Lawrence handled his troops in spite of his complete lack of military experience, I remember how on one occasion, in order to fool the Turks and take them by surprise, he sent a flying column of Bedouins on fleet camels to make a feint against the Turks at Amman, several hundred miles north, just west of Jericho and the hills of Moab. They occupied the attention of the Turks so completely that the latter failed to discover that Lawrence was approaching Maan and Akaba. It is only some sixty miles from the head of the Gulf of Akaba to the Hejaz railway, and in order to prevent the large Turkish garrison at the town of Maan on the railway from coming to the relief of Akaba, Lawrence personally led two flying columns in that direction. Seventeen miles south-west of Maan his Bedouins swept down on an important Turkish post and wiped it out completely. The Turks at Maan sent out a crack battalion in pursuit. But the young Englishman and his band of Bedouins disappeared in the blue, swallowed up in the desert so far as the Turks were concerned, until the evening of the following day, when they reappeared out of the mist many miles distant at another point on the railway. Here Lawrence merrily planted a few mines, demolished a whole mile of track, and destroyed a train. When the Turkish battalion reached the post at Fuweilah, which had been wiped out by the flying column, they found the vultures in possession.

The Turks camped for the night in the bottom of a valley near a well at a place called Aba-el-Lissan, fourteen miles from Maan, where later I lived with Lawrence and Emir Feisal. Lawrence meanwhile had left his column of camel troops and had gone off alone across the desert to see if he could locate the regiment. As soon as he found the Turks he hurriedly returned for Bedouin forces, brought them up on to the heights around Aba-el-Lissan, and completely surrounded the whole Turkish battalion by dawn.

For twelve hours the Arabs sniped at the Turks from their advantageous position on higher ground, killing many of them. The Turks were in a desperate hole, but Lawrence knew that if they were under capable leaders they would be able to fight their way out through the thin lines of Bedouins. At sunset Auda Abu Tayi, his valiant Arab leader, crept up to within two hundred yards of the Turks with fifty mounted Bedouins. Then jumping from cover, he galloped straight into the middle of the Turkish battalion. The latter were so amazed at his audacity that when the Arab chieftain, riding in advance, crashed into their midst, they broke and ran in all directions, but not before bullets had smashed old Auda Abu Tayi's field-glasses, pierced his revolver-holster, hit his sheathed sword, which he



WATCHING A BATTLE.

EMIR FEISAL, MR. LOWELL THOMAS, AUDA ABU TAYI, AND A GROUP OF ARAB GENERALS WATCHING THE BATTLE AT MAAN, ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT TURKISH STRONGHOLDS IN ARABIA.

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was holding in his hand, and killed three horses under him. In spite of these incidents the old Arab was delighted, and maintained afterward that it was the most corking fight he had been in for many months.

Lawrence, who was watching from the hill on the opposite side of the basin with four hundred Bedouins on camels, dashed down the slope as fast as the camels could carry them and charged into the midst of the panicky Turks. For twenty minutes one thousand Turks and five hundred Arabs were mixed together in a wild, frenzied mass, all shooting like mad. The Turks had made their fatal error in scattering, as Lawrence had surmised they might do, and the battle ended in massacre. Lawrence told me that he counted over three hundred dead in the mair position, and that as soon as the Turks had been beaten, the Bedouins, who had lost only two of their number, made straight for the Turkish camp to plunder it.

In the charge Lawrence shot his own camel through the head with his automatic. It dropped dead, and Lawrence was hurled out of his saddle and lay stunned in front of it, while his followers charged right on over him. Had he not been thrown directly in front of his own mount he would have been trampled to death.

Most of the two hundred prisoners were taken by Shereef Nasir and Lawrence, because the Bedouins dashed away, thinking only of loot.

TURKISH ATROCITIES.

The Arabs in this part of Arabia were particularly bitter against the Turks, and wanted to kill all of them because of the atrocities against their women and children committed by the Sultan's troops. They also wanted to revenge the death of a Sheik Belgawiya from Kerak, a very popular Arab leader who was thoroughly anti-Turkish. The Turks had captured him, harnessed him between four mules, and literally torn him limb from limb. That was the climax of a series of executions by torture which had so enraged the Arabs that they swore never to give quarter to another Turk.

Lawrence wanted to have the news spread throughout all the East that the Arabs always accepted prisoners, so he insisted that his men treat all the Turks who surrendered with the utmost fairness.

In the days following the battle at Aba-el-Lissan many small groups of Turks came in every few hours, and gave up their arms, crying "Moslem, Moslem," when they saw us, just as the Germans cry "Kamerad." A little later on, to save a Turkish garrison from massacre at one place, Lawrence had to labour from sunset till dawn, and would not have succeeded had he not personally walked down the valley in what for a moment was No Man's Land, and sat down on a rock between the Arabs and the Turks in order to break their field of fire.

The Colonel had left Wijh, some hundreds of miles south, with but two months' rations. After giving a part of his supplies to the captured Turks, the situation became critical. Nevertheless, the half-starved Arab army, led by this dauntless and resourceful English youth, continued the march north. The news of an endless string of victories travelled in advance of the flying column of Bedouins, and when Lawrence arrived at Gueira, the large Turkish garrison came out and laid down their arms without firing a shot. Then the Bedouins marched down the Wady Ithm to Kethura, where Lawrence charged another Turkish post and captured several hundred more troops. From there they trekked on toward Akaba, until they came to a place called Khadra, where some two thousand years ago the Romans constructed an old stone dam across the entire valley. The Turks had massed all their heavy artillery behind that wall, which constituted the outermost defence of the city of Akaba, Lawrence's most important objective. By the time the Shereefian army arrived in front of this Turkish stronghold the Bedouins of the Amran Darausha and Heiwat, who lived in the desert near Akaba, had heard of the great victories at Fuweilah and Aba-el-Lissan, and were coming across the sand dunes by the hundreds to join the advancing Arab forces.

CAPTURE OF AKABA.

The overwhelming defeat of the Turkish battalion at Aba-el-Lissan was the second phase of the battle of Akaba. The third merely consisted of Lawrence's spectacular manœuvre, when he accomplished what the Turks thought was impossible, and actually succeeded in leading his army of about ten thousand Bedouins over the precipitous King Solomon mountains and down into Akaba on the morning of July 6th, 1917.

Akaba is picturesquely located at the southern end of the great Wady Araba, which runs down from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akaba, and up which Moses and the Israelites made their way toward the promised land of Canaan. On one side is the sea and on all other sides are high, jagged, almost impassable, arid mountains. The town, like most places in the Near East, with the exception of the larger cities, is a mass of mud huts. Awnings cover the narrow streets and the little open shops are filled with brocades, prayer rugs, piles of dates, and brass dishes.

The Turks and Germans were so paralyzed at the feat of the Arabs in breaking through

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the mountains that they were ready to surrender at once.

Immediately upon the arrival in Akaba a German officer stepped up to Lawrence and saluted. He spoke neither Turkish nor Arabic, and did not know there was a revolution on. "What is this all about? What is this all about? Who are these men?" he shouted, excitedly.

"They belong to the army of Shereef Hussein, who is in revolt against the Turks," replied Lawrence.

"Who is Shereef Hussein?" said the German captain.

"He is the ruler of this part of Arabia," replied the blond Anglo-Arab.

"And what am I?" added the German officer, in perfect English.

"You are a prisoner."

"Will they take me to Mecca?"

"No, to Egypt."

"Is sugar very high over there?"

"Very cheap."

"Good," and he marched off happy to be out of the war and headed for a place where he could have plenty of sugar.

After the capture of Akaba, Lawrence and his army lived on the meat of the camels which had been killed in the battle and unripe dates for ten days.

In order to save his army from starving, Lawrence jumped on a racing camel and rode continuously for twenty-two hours at top speed across the mountains and desert of the Sinai peninsula. Completely worn out by this desperate ride as the climax to two months' continuous fighting, a thousand miles of trekking across one of the most barren parts of Arabia, living on soggy, unleavened bread and dates, and without having had a bath for more than a month, he turned his camel over to an M.P. at one of the street-corners in Port Tewfik, Suez, walked unsteadily into the Sinai Hotel, and ordered a bath. For six hours he remained in the tub, with the attendants serving him refreshing drinks. He says that day was the nearest approach to heaven that he ever expects to experience.



THE WADY ITHM, NEAR AKABA.

HERE COLONEL LAWRENCE WENT OUT INTO NO MAN'S LAND AND SAT ON A ROCK BETWEEN THE TWO LINES OF FIRE IN ORDER TO PREVENT HIS ARABS FROM MASSACRING THE TURKISH ARMY AT AKABA.

ADMIRAL WEMYSS TO THE RESCUE.

Lawrence explained the plight of the Arab troops to Admiral Wemyss, who immediately sent a cruiser filled with food to Akaba. At the same time Sir Rosslyn did a thing which will immortalize him in Arabian history. The Arabs were afraid that the Turks would return and capture Akaba at any time; so the Admiral moved his offices and staff ashore to an hotel in Ismalia, and sent his flagship round to Akaba for a whole month to reassure the Arabs.

Admiral Wemyss also gave Lawrence and the Arabs twenty machine-guns from his ships and a number of light guns. Most of them are still lost in Arabia. Lawrence received a letter from a warship since the war asking him for the return of one of their big cannon. He replied that he was sorry, but that he had mislaid it.

And so it was that Lawrence, the archæologist, captured the ancient seaport of King Solomon, where a battle had not been fought for at least two thousand years, and won the second great victory of the Arabian revolution, opening the way for the invasion of Syria. From a squabble in Arabia the Shereefian revolt changed to a campaign of world-wide importance directed against the very heart of the Turkish Empire, and from that time Lawrence's force became the right wing of Allenby's army.

The fall of Akaba, next to the capture of the holy city of Mecca, was the most significant event of the Arabian revolution up to this time, because it helped to unify the Arabs themselves. First of all it gave those

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whom Lawrence had already won over to the cause of the revolution vast confidence in themselves. It was Lawrence's strategy and personal bravery, of course, that played the most vital part in the success of these operations, but Lawrence very graciously and adroitly gave every bit of the credit to the Arab leaders under him, principally to old Auda Abu Tayi and Shereef Nasir. After winning his victory he was shrewd enough to take advantage of it in every conceivable way. He sent some of his cleverest Arab lieutenants through the Turkish lines into Syria to spread propaganda far and wide through the Turkish Empire regarding the battle of Akaba. He also sent couriers on commissions to all the tribes of the desert, although news of his exploits travelled without any stimulus. Within two months after the fall of Akaba Lawrence had succeeded in building up an army of two hundred thousand Bedouins.

WHY THE ARABIAN CAMPAIGN WAS KEPT SECRET.

When I left Palestine to join him, Lawrence's headquarters were still in Akaba. A short time after Lawrence's visit to Jerusalem, when I first made his acquaintance, I was having lunch with General Allenby and the Duke of Connaught. During the conversation Lawrence's name came up, and I asked General Allenby why it was that the Arabian campaign had been kept so much of a secret. He replied that it had been considered advisable to say as little about it as possible, because it was hoped that large numbers of Arabs fighting in the Turkish army might desert and join Shereef Hussein in his fight for Arabian independence. Another reason was because the wives and families of many of Lawrence's and Feisal's aids were still in Turkish territory. But it was thought that if the Bagdad, Aleppo, Damascus, and Jerusalem Arabs who had been conscripted into the Sultan's army knew that the Allies were playing an important part in the Arabian affair, perhaps not quite so many of them would desert. The Allies preferred to let the campaign appear purely Arabian in character. That was one reason why Lawrence's name was never mentioned in despatches. But General Allenby added that the campaign had been so successful that it was no longer necessary to keep it a complete secret, and that if I were interested in what was happening, and agreed not to publish the story until the end of the war, he would be glad to let me go down and join Lawrence, with the idea of giving the Arabs full credit for all that they had accomplished.

It was at the head of the Gulf of Akaba that we found Lawrence and Emir Feisal. Lawrence had transformed the port into a great base depot, and enormous piles of supplies lay stacked on the sands. On landing several of the British officers who were in charge of the receiving of supplies at Akaba took us over to the tent which was to be our headquarters while in Arabia. A few hours later Lawrence came down the Wady Araba, returning from one of his usual mysterious expeditions. He greeted us with the faint smile which was always on his face, welcoming us as if it were an everyday occurrence for Americans to arrive in holy Arabia in the middle of the war. He was wearing an even more gorgeous costume than the one I had seen him wearing in Jerusalem. It was of pale green, embroidered with beautiful gold figures.

A TYPICAL DAY WITH LAWRENCE.

It would be impossible to describe a typical day with Lawrence because no two days were in any way alike. But the camp routine at the hadquarters of the Arabian army, when no active campaigning was afoot, followed some such programme as this: At 5 a.m. the army *iman* would climb the highest hill-top and give the morning call to prayers. He was a chap with such an astonishing voice that he woke every man and animal in Akaba. Immediately after he had finished calling the Arabian proletariat, Emir Feisal's private *iman* would call gently and far more musically at the door of his tent. A few minutes later a cup of sweetened coffee would turn up for each of us, brought in by one of Feisal's slaves. The Emir has five young Abyssinian blacks. These slaves are the acme of fidelity because the Emir does not treat them as slaves nor regard them as such. Whenever one of them needs money, Feisal tells him to help himself to whatever he needs from his bag of gold. No matter what they take, he never complains, and as a result the thought of robbing him never seems to occur to them.

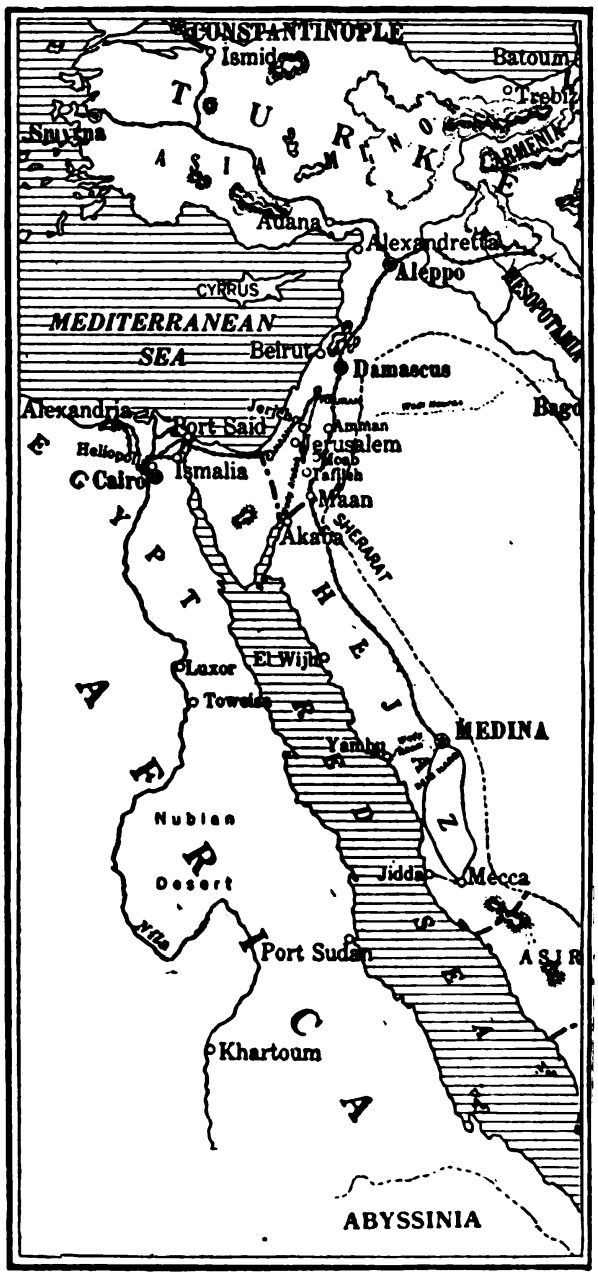
At 6 a.m., or a little later, we were in the habit of breakfasting with Lawrence and Feisal in the Emir's tent, where there were two modern carpets and an old Baluchistan prayer rug. Breakfast on lucky days included Mecca cakes (a many-layered pastry of richly-spiced puffed bread) and cooked *duhra* (a small round white seed—rather nasty stuff), besides dates. After breakfast little glasses of sweet tea were produced. From then until 8 a.m. Lawrence would discuss the possible events of the day with either the British officers or some of the more prominent Arab leaders. During that time Feisal worked with his secretary or talked over private affairs in his tent with Lawrence.

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At 8 a.m. Feisal would hold court and grant audiences in the Diwan tent. According to the regular procedure it was customary for the Emir to sit at the end of a great rug, and callers or petitioners to sit in front of the tent in a half-circle until they were called up. All questions were settled summarily and nothing was ever left over.

For instance, one morning I was sitting in Lawrence's tent when a young Bedouin was brought in charged with an evil eye. Feisal was not present. Lawrence told the young Arab to sit on the opposite side of the tent and look at him. For ten minutes Lawrence regarded him with steady gaze, his steel-blue eyes boring a hole right through him. At the end of the ten minutes Lawrence dismissed the Bedouin with the verdict that he had driven off the evil eye.

One day a member of Lawrence's body-guard came to him, saying that one of his fellow-companions possessed the evil eye, because he had looked at his camel and it straightway went lame. Lawrence settled this difficulty by putting the man charged with the evil eye on the lame camel and giving the defendant's camel to the man who brought up the charge.



MAP ILLUSTRATING THE SCENE OF COLONEL LAWRENCE'S EXPLOITS.

The Arabs are terrified by blue eyes. Lawrence's are especially blue, so the Bedouins thought there was something uncanny about him. These people nearly all have eyes as black as velvet. Whenever Feisal was present Lawrence would step aside and decline to decide upon any question. He did this because he himself had no ambition to become the ruler of Arabia and because he knew that it would be far safer for the future of the Arabs if their petty differences were handled in the usual way and not by an outsider. Lawrence never did anything himself that he could delegate to someone else who was capable of handling it to his satisfaction.

ARAB MEALS.

Usually at 11.30 a.m. Feisal arose and walked back to his living-tent, where a little lunch would be served. Lawrence, in the meantime, would spend a half-hour or so reading the inevitable "Aristophanes," which he always carried with him no matter where he went. He carried three books with him all through the campaign, "The Oxford Book of English Verse," Mallory's "Morte d'Arthur," and "Aristophanes," which shows his catholic taste. On fortunate days lunch consisted of several dishes: stewed thorn buds, lentils, unleavened bread cooked in the sand, and rice or honey cakes. I ate with a spoon, although the Arabs used their fingers, as did Lawrence also. After lunch there followed a short delay of general talk, rounding out the conversation of the luncheon hour, and in the meantime black bitter coffee and sweetened tea would be served. In drinking tea and coffee the tribesmen always made as much noise as possible, because that is a polite indication that you are enjoying your drink. Then the Emir would dictate letters to an Arab scribe, and sleep, while Lawrence squatted on a prayer rug in his own tent reading. In case there were afternoon cases to be disposed of, Shereef Lawrence or Shereef Feisal would again hold court in the

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reception tent. From 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. Feisal would usually grant private audiences, and at such times Lawrence was almost always with him, since the discussion would have to do with reconnaissance and military tactics.

About 6 p.m. would come the evening meal, much like lunch, but with large fragments of mutton crowning the rice heap, after which would come intermittent cups of tea until bedtime, which for Lawrence was never any fixed hour. At night Lawrence would have many of his most important consultations with the Arab leaders. Occasionally we simply listened to Feisal telling stories of what he saw in Syria and Turkey during the eighteen years he and the other members of his family were held as political prisoners by Abdul Hamid.

Following the fall of Akaba, Lawrence made several trips over to Palestine to confer with Allenby, and from that time the British Expeditionary Forces in Palestine and the Arabian army of King Hussein, led by Lawrence, worked hand-in-hand in sweeping the Turks out of Syria. During the latter part of the campaign Lawrence was really an army corps commander under General Allenby, doing the work which is usually assigned to a lieutenant-general. Northward from the head of the Gulf of Akaba they were joined by the Ibn Jazi Howeitat and the Beni Sakhr, two of the best fighting tribes in the whole Arabian peninsula. About the same time the Juheinah, the Ateibah, and the Anazeh came riding in on their camels to join Emir Feisal.

The Arab army was divided into two distinct parts, one known as the "regulars" and the other as the "irregulars." The regulars were all infantrymen. There were about twenty thousand of them. They were either deserters from the Turkish army or men of Arab blood who had been fighting under the Sultan's flag, and who had volunteered to join the forces of King Hussein after being taken prisoner in Mesopotamia, or by Allenby in Palestine. At first they were used mainly for taking the place of Turkish garrisons at posts captured by the advancing Shereefian hordes. Later on, after they had been thoroughly trained, they were used as storm-troops in capturing fortified positions.

The Arab regulars were under an Irishman, Colonel P. C. Joyce, who next to Lawrence probably played a more important part in the Arabian campaign than any other outsider.

The irregulars, who were by far the most numerous, were Bedouins, mounted on camels and horses. Lawrence had over two hundred thousand of them at his command.

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ALLENBY'S NEW CAMPAIGN.

General Allenby had planned a big attack against the Turks in Southern Palestine which was to come off in May, 1918, but at that time the Allies were hard pressed on the Western front and Allenby was forced to send the greater part of his troops up to France to help keep the Germans from Paris. Lawrence insisted on starting the push north into Syria in September or before, but General Allenby informed him that it would be impossible for him to co-operate before late in the autumn. But Lawrence argued: "By that time the rains will be on in Arabia and the Arabs will be forced to take their animals to the pastures of the oases." So Allenby rearranged his plans, and sent an aeroplane down into Arabia from Jerusalem early in August with a message to Lawrence announcing that he would be ready to start a new campaign about the middle of September. Lawrence ordered his army to advance on August 30th, after he and Allenby had agreed that the Arabs should cut the Turkish railway lines around Deraa, north-east of the Sea of Galilee, and make a camouflage attack on Amman, the strong Turkish town on the Pilgrim Railway, just east of Jericho. By forced marches Lawrence and his Bedouin army swept north across the deserts east of the Dead Sea and began their dance around Deraa. Just south of this important railway junction Lawrence dynamited a bridge, placing twice as much dynamite under it as necessary in order to make a thorough job of it. This made the seventy-ninth bridge that he had blown up thus far in the Arabian campaign. He then destroyed sections of the railway at seventeen different points, touching off seven of the mines in person. The French co-operated in this affair and did some splendid artillery work. The Shereefian army pushed on north and entered Damascus, which had been their capital hundreds of years before. They drove the Turks out of the city after a hot hand-to-hand fight in the streets, and Lieutenant-General Harry Cheval, commander of the famous desert mounted corps of General Allenby's Palestine forces, swept into Damascus the following morning right on the heels of Lawrence and his Bedouins, who captured the city on the evening of October 30th.

LAWRENCE'S ENTRY INTO DAMASCUS.

The ~~twenty-eight~~ 30-year-old commander-in-chief of the greatest army that had been raised in Arabia for five centuries, who in less than a year had made himself the most powerful man in Arabia since the days of the great Caliph Haroun-el-Raschid, who had been appointed an Emir of Arabia, made his official entry into Damascus, the city which

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was the ultimate goal of his whole campaign, at seven o'clock on the morning of October 31st. Hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Arabs, including the entire population of Damascus, the oldest city in the world which remains standing, and thousands and thousands of the wild Bedouin tribes from the fringes of the desert packed the "street that is called straight," and jammed the bazaar section as Lawrence rode through the city, dressed in the garb of a Prince of Mecca. Howling dervishes ran in front of him, dancing and sticking knives into their flesh, while behind him came his flying column of picturesque Arabian knights. As Lawrence passed the gates of Damascus the inhabitants in that ancient Arab capital, which was once the most glorious city of the East, realized that they had at last been freed from the Turkish yoke. For months they had heard of the marvellous exploits of Shereef Lawrence, and now for the first time they saw the mysterious Englishman who had united the peoples of Arabia in a smashing campaign which had resulted in the downfall of the Ottomans. As they saw him come swinging along through the bazaars on the back of his camel, it seemed as though all the people of Damascus shouted his name in one joyful chorus. For more than ten miles along the streets of the city the crowds gave this Englishman one of the greatest ovations ever given to any man.



COLONEL P. C. JOYCE,

WHO, NEXT TO LAWRENCE, PROBABLY PLAYED THE MOST IMPORTANT PART IN LIBERATING HOLY ARABIA.

After the arrival of Allenby's forces Lawrence temporarily remained as the Governor of Damascus, and ruled over the city of the Caliphs until he could organize the Arab leaders and turn over the government to them. After the fall of Damascus Allenby and Lawrence joined forces and freed the great Syrian seaport of Beirut, where the famous American College is located. Still unsatisfied, they swept on north until they had driven the Turks out of Aleppo, one of the most strategical points in the whole world so far as the great war was concerned. And then, if the Turks had not laid down their arms, they would have driven the Sultan's army all the way into the Golden Horn. When Allenby and Lawrence cut the Berlin–Bagdad Railway, the dream of the Kaiser and the Junkers for a *Mittel-Europa* reaching from the Baltic to the Persian Gulf vanished into thin air.

NEXT MONTH'S INSTALMENT.

If you can make an Arab laugh you can do almost anything you wish with him. On one occasion, when Lawrence and a half-bred Haurani were trekking across Arabia, they were captured by a party of cutthroat robber Arabs. In a few more minutes the Colonel and his companion would have been lying dead among the sand-dunes. But Lawrence's keen wit saved them and they escaped in a most amazing manner. In the next number of THE STRAND Mr. Lowell Thomas will describe the above episode in full, and tell us many other humorous as well as thrilling stories of Lawrence's adventures while engaged in liberating Holy Arabia. Lawrence seemed to bear a charmed life, and Mr. Lowell Thomas describes how he escaped from death on another occasion, when a pistol was pressed against his temple, merely because the trigger refused to work.

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Introduction

By H. G. WELLS.

An Experiment in Illustration.

A visit from a brilliant young artist from Holland, M. Briedé, and a letter from the Editor of THE STRAND MAGAZINE remind me that it is nearly a quarter of a century since "The War of the Worlds" first saw the light. The book was begotten by a remark of my brother Frank. We were walking together through some particularly peaceful Surrey scenery. "Suppose some beings from another planet were to drop out of the sky suddenly," said he, "and began laying about them here!" Perhaps we had been talking of the discovery of Tasmania by the Europeans—a very frightful disaster for the native Tasmanians. I forget. But that was the point of departure.

In those days I was writing short stories, and the particular sort of short story that amused me most to do was the vivid realization of some disregarded possibility in such a way as to comment on the false securities and fatuous self-satisfaction of the everyday life—as we knew it then. Because in those days the conviction that history had settled down to a sort of jog-trot comedy was very widespread indeed. Tragedy, people thought had gone out of human life for ever. A few of us were trying to point out the obvious possibilities of flying, of great guns, of poison gas, and so forth in presently making life uncomfortable if some sort of world peace was not assured, but the books we wrote were regarded as the silliest of imaginative gymnastics. Well, the world knows better now.

The technical interest of a story like "The War of the Worlds" lies in the attempt to keep everything within the bounds of possibility. And the value of the story to me lies in this, that from first to last there is nothing in it that is impossible. There *may* be life in Mars—that planet could support life, and that life would have to obey certain conditions; intelligence may have gone farther there than on this planet, and so on. All the possibilities and impossibilities of the case I worked out very carefully before I began the story, and then, by making all the earthly side of it as commonplace and familiar as possible, I got as much of the quality of reality into it as I could. It had the good fortune to please a number of readers, and won me the interest and friendship of that great Frenchman Anatole France, who shares with Mr. Thomas Hardy the throne, if there is a throne, in the hierarchy of contemporary literature. And just as my brother's remark had stirred up my imagination, so my expansion of his remark stirred up a number of imaginative people to the amusement of "drawing Martians." My friends, Professor York Powell and R. A. M. Stevenson (who is not to be confused with his cousin, R. L. S.), produced some sheaves of fantastic sketches. The story from first to last has provoked quite a number of gifted illustrators. It was done very well by Mr. Warwick Goble during its first magazine publication. Years ago a young Belgian artist named Alvim-Corrêa came to England to show me a portfolio of drawings, which were used in a sumptuous illustrated edition (in French) published by Vandamme in Brussels. Now comes M. Briedé, similarly stimulated to probe the Martian mystery. His Martians are much more "vegetable" than those of any previous reconstructor, and his Martian machines liker living things. Here they are, and with them, for the benefit of that large (and I fear growing) and very undeserving class of readers who have never read "The War of the Worlds," is a compact summary of the story they illustrate. Some day men may really know what there is on Mars; they may really see Martians. Maybe then some curious collector, who has preserved the early guesses of these various illustrators, will be able to compare them with the actual creature

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THIS CONDENSATION OF HIS FAMOUS NOVEL IS BY MR. WELLS HIMSELF.

The WAR OF THE WORLDS

By H. G. WELLS

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHAN BRIEDÉ

I.
A FALLING STAR.

THE first star was seen early in the morning rushing over Winchester eastward, high in the atmosphere. Hundreds must have seen it, and taken it for an ordinary falling star. For in those days no one gave a thought to the outer worlds of space as sources of human danger. At most, terrestrial men fancied there might be other men upon Mars, perhaps inferior to themselves and ready to welcome a missionary enterprise. Yet across the gulf of space, minds that are to our minds as ours are to the beasts that perish, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic, regarded this earth with envious eyes, and slowly and surely drew their plans against us.

No one seems to have troubled to look for the fallen thing that night. But early in the morning it was found, almost entirely buried in the sand, among the scattered splinters of a fir-tree on the common between Horsell, Woking, and Ottershaw. The uncovered part had the appearance of a huge cylinder, caked over, and its outline softened, by a thick, scaly, dun-coloured incrustation. It had a diameter of about thirty yards. A stirring noise within the cylinder was ascribed at first to the unequal cooling of its surface, for at that time it did not occur to anyone that it might be hollow.

When, about sunset, I joined the crowd at the edge of the pit the thing had dug by its impact with the soil, the end of the cylinder was being screwed out from within. Nearly two feet of shining screw projected. Somebody blundered against me, and I narrowly missed being pitched on the top of the screw. As I turned to avoid the fall the lid of the cylinder fell upon the gravel with a ringing concussion. For a moment the cavity seemed perfectly black, for I had the sunset in my eyes.

I think everyone expected to see a man emerge—possibly something a little unlike us terrestrial men, but in all essentials a man. I know I did. But, looking, I presently saw something stirring within the shadow—greyish, billowy movements, one above another, and then two luminous discs like eyes. Then something resembling a little grey snake, about the thickness of a walking stick coiled up out of the writhing middle, and wriggled in the air towards me, and then another.

A big, greyish, rounded bulk, the size, perhaps, of a bear, was rising slowly and painfully out of the cylinder. As it bulged up and caught the light, it glistened like wet leather. Two large, dark-coloured eyes were regarding me steadfastly. It was rounded, and had, one might say, a face. There was a mouth under the eyes, the lipless brim of which quivered and panted, and dropped saliva. The body heaved and pulsated convulsively. A lank, tentacular appendage gripped the edge of the cylinder, another swayed in the air.

Those who have never seen a living Martian can scarcely imagine the strange horror of their appearance. The peculiar V-shaped mouth with its pointed upper lip, the absence of brow ridges, the absence of a chin beneath the wedge-like lower lip, the incessant quivering of this mouth, the Gorgon groups of tentacles, the tumultuous breathing of the lungs in a strange atmosphere, the evident heaviness and painfulness of movement, due to the greater gravitational energy of the earth—above all, the extraordinary intensity of the immense eyes—culminated in an effect akin to nausea. There was something fungoid in the oily brown skin, something in the clumsy deliberation of their tedious movements unspeakably terrible. Even at this first encounter,

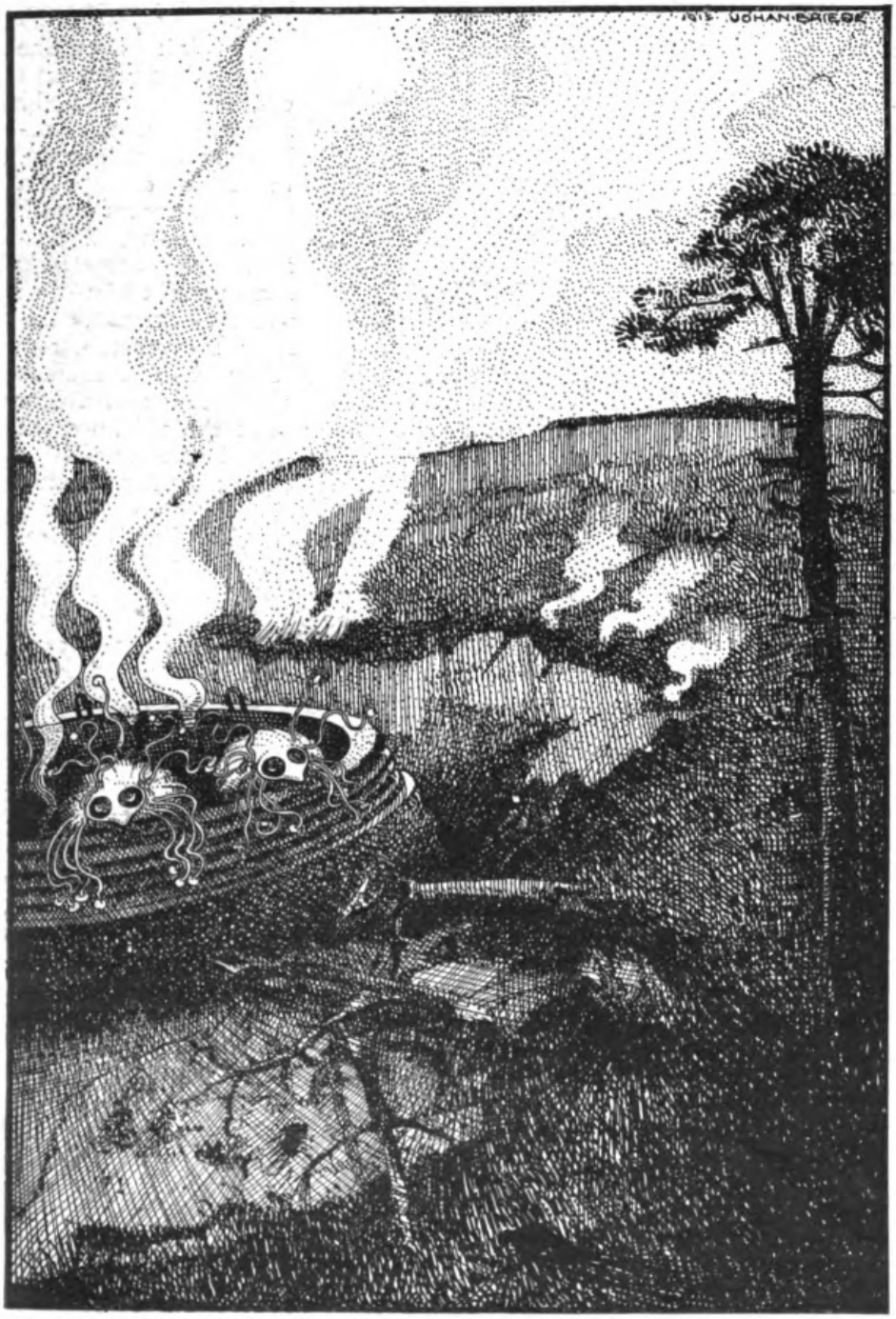
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this first glimpse, I was overcome with disgust and dread.

Suddenly the monster vanished. It had toppled over the brim of the cylinder, and fallen into the pit with a thud like the fall of a great mass of leather. I heard it give a peculiar thick cry, and forthwith another of these creatures appeared darkly in the deep shadow of the aperture.

At that my rigour of terror passed away. I turned, and, running madly, made for the first group of trees, perhaps a hundred yards away; but I ran slantingly and stumbling, for I could not avert my face from these things. There, among some young pine trees and furze bushes, I stopped, panting, and waited further developments. Once a leash of thin black whips, like the arms of an octopus, flashed across the sunset, and was immediately withdrawn, and afterwards a thin rod rose up, joint by joint, bearing at its apex a circular disc that spun with a wobbling motion.

Suddenly there was a flash of light, and a quantity of luminous greenish smoke came out of the pit in three distinct puffs, which drove up, one after the other, straight into the still air. At the same time a faint hissing sound became audible. Beyond the pit stood a little wedge of people, a little knot of small vertical black shapes upon the black ground. As the green smoke rose their faces flashed out pallid green, and faded again as it vanished.



"THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER SEEN A LIVING MARTIAN CAN SCARCELY IMAGINE THE STRANGE HORROR OF THEIR APPEARANCE."

Then slowly the hissing passed into humming, into a long, loud droning noise. Slowly a humped shape rose out of the pit, and the ghost of a beam of light seemed to flicker out from it. Forthwith, flashes of actual flame, a bright glare leaping from one to another, sprang from the scattered group of men. It was as if some invisible jet impinged upon them and flashed into white flame. It was as if each man were suddenly and momentarily turned to fire.

Then, by the light of their own destruction, I saw them staggering and falling, and their supporters turning to run.

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I stood staring, not as yet realizing that this was death leaping from man to man in that little distant crowd. All I felt was that it was something strange. An almost noiseless and blinding flash of light, and a man fell headlong and lay still, and as the unseen shaft of heat passed over them, pine trees burst into fire, and every dry furze-bush became with one dull thud a mass of flames. It is still a matter of wonder how the Martians are able to slay men so swiftly and so silently. Many think that in some way they are able to generate an intense heat in a chamber of practically absolute non-conductivity. This intense heat they project in a parallel beam against any object they choose by means of a polished parabolic mirror of unknown composition—much as the parabolic mirror of a lighthouse projects a beam of light. But no one has absolutely proved these details. However it is done, it is certain that a beam of heat is the essence of the matter—heat, and invisible, instead of visible, light. Whatever is combustible flashes into flame at its touch, lead runs like water, it softens iron, cracks and melts glass, and when it falls upon water incontinently that explodes into steam.

That night nearly forty people lay under the starlight about the pit, charred and distorted beyond recognition, and all night long the common from Horsell to Maybury was deserted, and brightly ablaze.



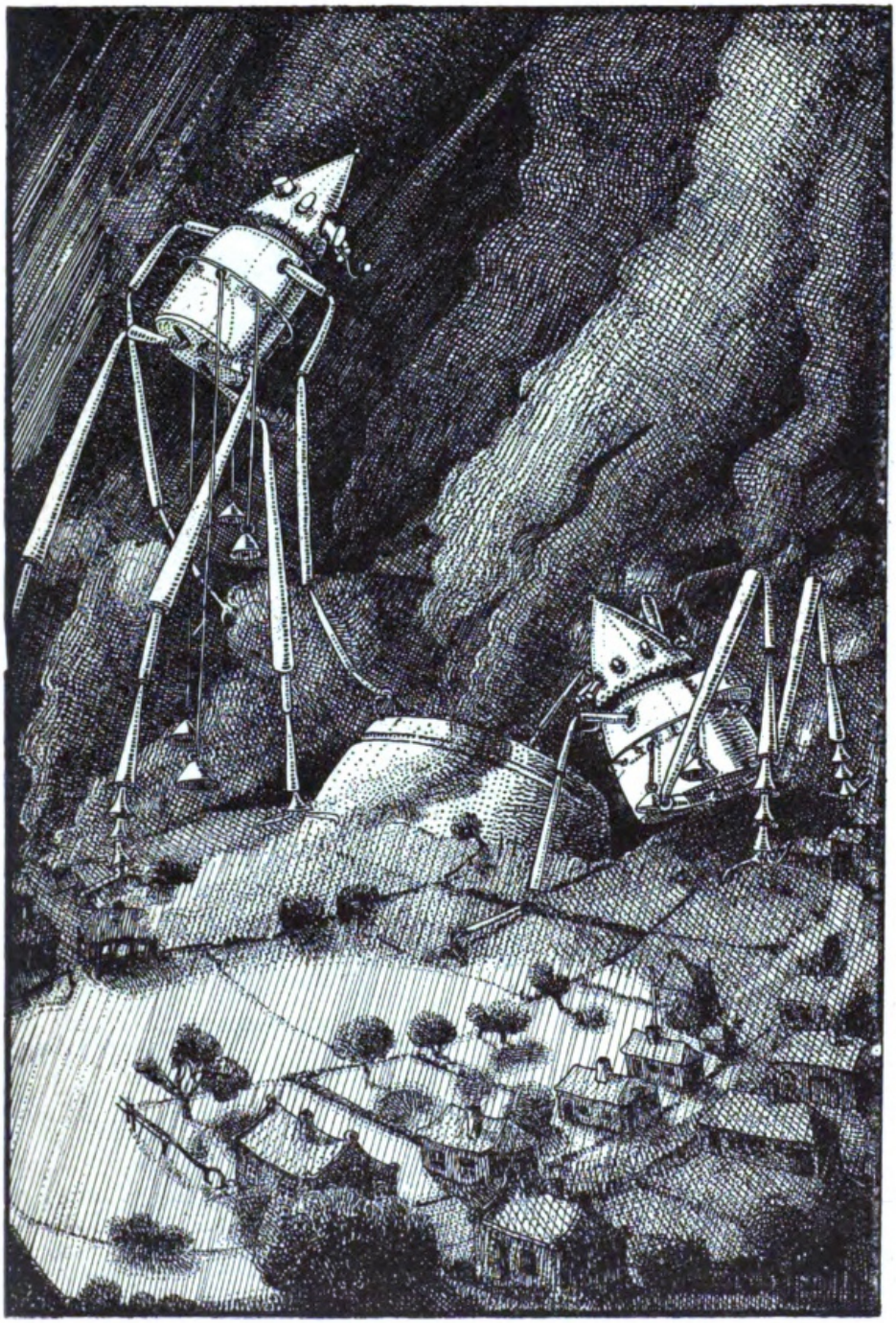
"AN ALMOST NOISELESS AND BLINDING FLASH OF LIGHT, AND A MAN FELL HEADLONG AND LAY STILL, PINE TREES BURST INTO FIRE, AND EVERY DRY FURZE-BUSH BECAME A MASS OF FLAMES."

II.

FIGHTING BEGINS.

It was in a storm that I first saw the Martians at large, on the night of the third falling star. How can I describe the thing I saw? A monstrous tripod, higher than many houses, striding over the young pine trees, and smashing them aside in its career; a walking engine of glittering metal, striding now across the heather, articulate ropes of steel dangling from it, and the clattering

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"A MONSTROUS TRIPOD STRIDING OVER THE YOUNG PINE TREES; A WALKING ENGINE OF GLITTERING METAL, ARTICULATE ROPES OF STEEL DANGLING FROM IT, AND THE CLATTERING TUMULT OF ITS PASSAGE MINGLING WITH THE RIOT OF THE THUNDER."

tumult of its passage mingling with the riot of the thunder. A flash, and it came out vividly, heeling over one way with two feet in the air, to vanish and reappear almost instantly, as it seemed, with the next flash, a hundred yards nearer. Can you imagine a milking-stool tilted and bowled violently along the ground? That was the impression those instant flashes gave. But instead of a milking-stool, imagine it a great body of machinery on a tripod stand.

Seen nearer, the thing was incredibly strange, for it was no mere insensate machine driving on its way. Machine it was, with a ringing metallic pace, and long flexible glittering tentacles (one of which gripped a young pinetree) swinging and rattling about its strange body. It picked its road as it went striding along, and the brazen hood that surmounted it moved to and fro with the inevitable suggestion of a head looking about it. Behind the main body was a huge thing of white metal like a gigantic fisherman's basket, and puffs of green smoke squirted out from the joints of the limbs as the monster swept by me.

All that night the creatures were busy—communicating, I suppose, and maturing their plans. It was not until the next morning that our resistance began. The fighting I saw took place at Shepperton Wey, where a crowd of fugitives were waiting their turn to cross the river by the ferry.

Suddenly we saw a rush of smoke far away up the river, a puff of smoke that jerked up into the air, and hung; and forthwith the ground heaved under foot, and a heavy explosion shook the air, smashing two or three windows in the houses near, and leaving us astonished.

Quickly, one after the other, one, two, three, four of the armoured Martians appeared, far away over the little trees, across the flat meadows that stretch towards Chertsey, and striding hurriedly towards

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the river. Little cowled figures they seemed at first, going with a rolling motion and as fast as flying birds.

Then, advancing obliquely towards us, came a fifth. Their armoured bodies glittered in the sun as they swept swiftly forward upon the guns, growing rapidly larger as they drew nearer. One on the extreme left—the remotest, that is—flourished a huge case high in the air, and the ghostly terrible heat-ray I had already seen on Friday night smote towards Chertsey, and struck the town.

"Get under water!" I shouted, unheeded. And, as the first Martian towered overhead scarcely a couple of hundred feet away, I flung myself under the surface.

When I raised my head, it was on the bank, and, in a stride, wading halfway across. The knees of its foremost legs bent at the further bank, and in another moment it had raised itself to its full height again, close to the village of Shepperton. Forthwith the six guns, which, unknown to anyone on the right bank, had been hidden behind the outskirts of that village, fired simultaneously. The sudden near concussions, the last close upon the first, made my heart jump. The monster was already raising the case generating the heat-ray as the first shell burst six yards above the hood.

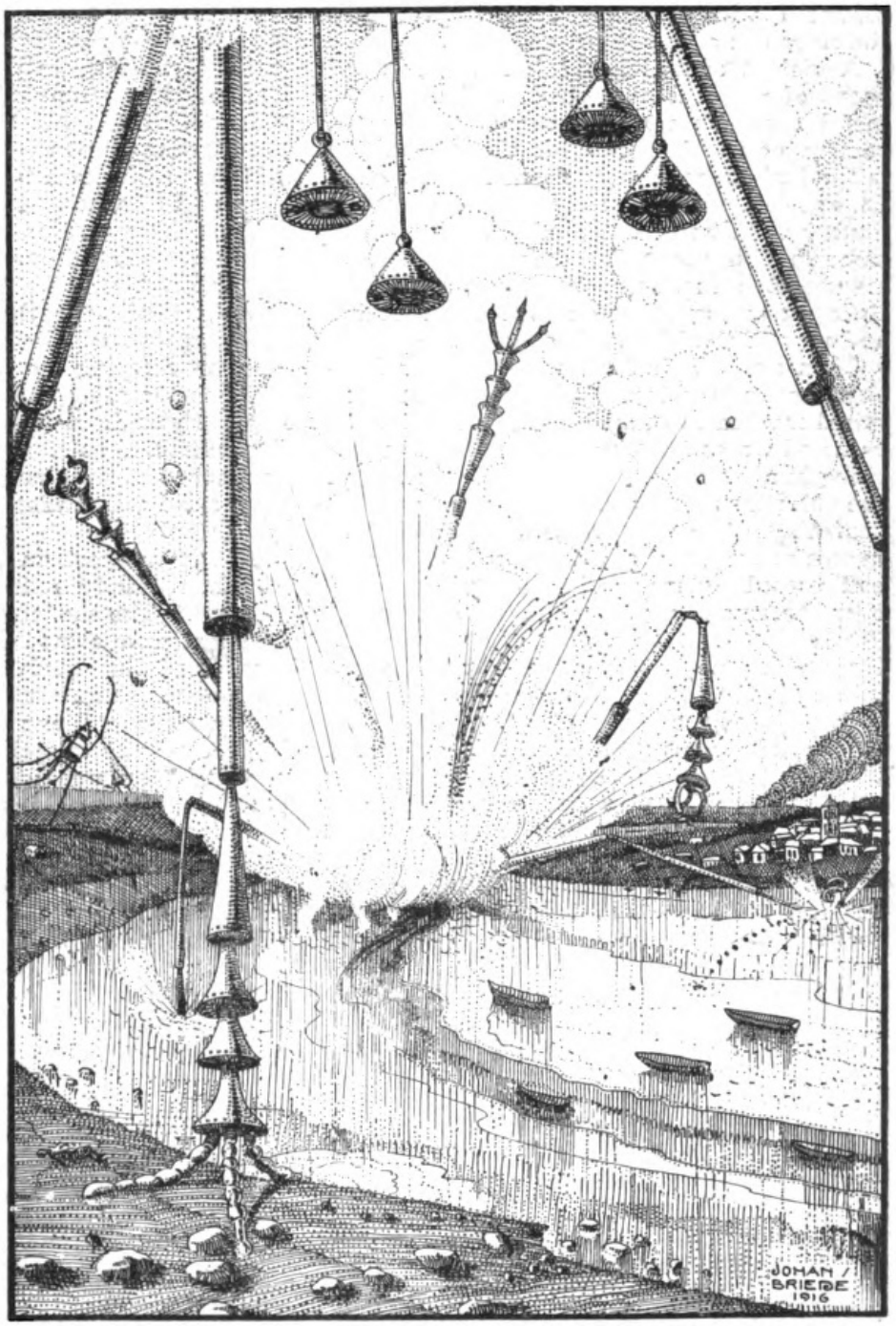
Simultaneously two other shells burst in the air near the body as the hood twisted round in time to receive, but not in time to dodge, the fourth shell.

The shell burst clean in the face of the thing. The hood bulged, flashed, was whirled off in a dozen tattered fragments of red flesh and glittering metal.

"Hit!" shouted I, with something between a scream and a cheer.

I heard answering shouts from the people in the water about me. I could have leapt out of the water with that momentary exultation.

The decapitated colossus reeled like a drunken giant, but it did not fall over. It



"THE SHELL BURST CLEAN IN THE FACE OF THE THING. THE HOOD BULGED, FLASHED, WAS WHIRLED OFF IN A DOZEN TATTERED FRAGMENTS OF RED FLESH AND GLITTERING METAL."

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recovered its balance by a miracle, and, no longer heeding its steps, and with the camera that fired the heat-ray now rigidly upheld, it reeled swiftly upon Shepperton. The living intelligence, the Martian within the hood, was slain and splashed to the four winds of heaven, and the thing was now but a mere intricate device of metal whirling to destruction. It drove along in a straight line, incapable of guidance. It struck the tower of Shepperton church, smashing it down as the impact of a battering-ram might have done, swerved aside, blundered on, and collapsed with a tremendous impact into the river out of my sight.

A violent explosion shook the air, and a spout of water, steam, mud, and shattered metal shot far up into the sky. As the camera of the heat-ray hit the water, the latter had incontinently flashed into steam. In another moment a huge wave, like a muddy tidal bore, but almost scalding hot, came sweeping round the bend upstream. I saw people struggling shorewards, and heard their screaming faintly above the seething and roar of the Martian's collapse.

Then again I ducked, for the other Martians were advancing. When for a moment I raised my head to take breath and throw the hair and water from my eyes, the steam was rising in a whirling white fog that at first hid the Martians altogether. The noise was deafening. Then I saw them dimly, colossal figures of grey, magnified by the mist. They had passed by me, and two were stooping over the tumultuous ruins of their comrade.

The third and fourth stood beside him in the water, one perhaps two hundred yards from me, the other towards Laleham. The generators of the heat-rays waved high, and the hissing beams smote down this way and that.

The air was full of sound, a deafening and confusing conflict of noises, the clangorous din of the Martians, the crash of falling houses, the thud of trees, fences, sheds, flashing into flame, and the crackling and roaring of fire. Dense black smoke was leaping up to mingle with the steam from the river, and as the heat-ray went to and fro over Weybridge, its impact was marked by flashes of incandescent white, that gave place at once to a smoky dance of lurid flames.

For a moment, perhaps, I stood there, breast-high in the almost boiling water, dumbfounded at my position, hopeless of escape. Through the reek I could see the people who had been with me in the river scrambling out of the water through the reeds, like little frogs hurrying through grass from the advance of a man, or running to and fro in utter dismay on the towing-path.

Then suddenly the white flashes of the heat-ray came leaping towards me. The houses caved in as they dissolved at its touch, and darted out flames; the trees changed to fire with a roar. It flickered up and down the towing-path, licking off the people who ran this way and that, and came down to the water's edge not fifty yards from where I stood. It swept across the river to Shepperton, and the water in its track rose in a boiling wheal crested with steam. I turned shoreward.

In another moment the huge wave, well-nigh at the boiling-point, had rushed upon me. I screamed aloud, and, scalded, half-blinded, agonized, I staggered through the leaping, hissing water towards the shore. Had my foot stumbled, it would have been the end. I fell helplessly, in full sight of the Martians, upon the broad, bare gravelly spit that runs down to mark the angle of the Wey and Thames. I expected nothing but death. I have a dim memory of the foot of a Martian coming down within a score of feet of my head, driving straight into the loose gravel, whirling it this way and that, and lifting again; of a long suspense, and then of the four carrying the *débris* of their comrade between them, now clear, and then presently faint, through a veil of smoke, receding interminably, as it seemed to me, across a vast space of river and meadow. And then, very slowly, I realized that by a miracle I had escaped.

But it was not on the heat-ray that the Martians chiefly relied in their march on London. The monsters I saw that evening as I fled were armed with tubes which they discharged like guns. There was no flash, no smoke, simply that loaded detonation. Every minute I expected the fire of some hidden battery to spring upon them, but the evening calm was unbroken. Their figures grew smaller as they receded, and presently the gathering night had swallowed them up. Only towards Sunbury was a dark appearance, as though a conical hill had suddenly come into being there, and remoter across the river, towards Walton, I saw another such summit. They grew lower and broader even as I stared. These, as I knew later, were the black smoke. It was heavy, this vapour, heavier than the densest smoke, so that, after the first tumultuous uprush and outflow of its impact, it sank down through the air and poured over the ground in a manner rather liquid than gaseous, abandoning the hills, and streaming into the valleys and ditches and watercourses, even as I have heard the carbonic acid gas that pours from volcanic clefts is wont to do And the touch of that vapour, the inhaling of its pungent wisps, was death to all that breathes.

One has to imagine the fate of those batteries towards Esher, waiting so tensely

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in the twilight, as well as one may. Survivors there were none. One may picture the orderly expectation, the officers alert and watchful, the gunners ready, the ammunition piled to hand, the limber gunners with their horses and wagons, the groups of civilian spectators standing as near as they were permitted, the evening stillness, the ambulances and hospital tents, with the burnt and wounded from Weybridge; then the dull resonance of the shots the Martians fired, and the clumsy projectile whirling over the trees and houses, and smashing amidst the neighbouring fields.

One may picture, too, the sudden shifting of the attention, the swiftly spreading coils and bellyings of that blackness advancing headlong, towering heavenward, turning the twilight to a palpable darkness, a strange and horrible antagonist of vapour striding upon its victims, men and horses near it seen dimly running, shrieking, falling headlong, shouts of dismay, the guns suddenly abandoned, men choking and writhing on the ground, and the swift broadening out of the opaque cone of smoke. And then, night and extinction—nothing but a silent mass of impenetrable vapour hiding its dead.



"EVERYWHERE SPREAD THE RED WEED, WHOSE SEED THE MARTIANS HAD BROUGHT WITH THEM."

III.

DEAD LONDON.

So you understand the roaring wave of fear that swept through the greatest city in the world just as Monday was dawning—the stream of flight rising swiftly to a torrent, lashing in a foaming tumult round the railway stations, banked up into a horrible struggle about the shipping in the Thames, and hurrying by every available channel northward and eastward. By ten o'clock the police organization, and by midday even the railway organizations, were losing coherency, losing shape and efficiency, guttering, softening, running at last in that swift liquefaction of the social body.

All the railway lines north of the Thames

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and the South-Eastern people at Cannon Street had been warned by midnight on Sunday, and trains were being filled, people were fighting savagely for standing-room in the carriages, even at two o'clock. By three people were being trampled and crushed even in Bishopsgate Street; a couple of hundred yards or more from Liverpool Street station revolvers were fired, people stabbed, and the policemen who had been sent to direct the traffic, exhausted and infuriated, were breaking the heads of the people they they were called out to protect.

And as the day advanced the engine-drivers and stokers refused to return to London, the pressure of the flight drove the people in an ever-thickening multitude away from the stations and along the northward-running roads. By midday a Martian had been seen at Barnes, and a cloud of slowly sinking black vapour drove along the Thames and across the flats of Lambeth, cutting off all escape over the bridges in its advance.

If one could have hung that June morning in a balloon in the blazing blue above London, every northward and eastward road running out of the infinite tangle of streets would have seemed stippled black with the streaming fugitives, each dot a human agony of terror and physical distress.

Directly below him the balloonist would have seen the network of streets far and wide, houses, churches, squares, crescents, gardens—already derelict—spread out like a huge map, and in the southward *blotted*. Over Ealing, Richmond, Wimbledon, it would have seemed as if some monstrous pen had flung ink upon the chart. Steadily, incessantly, each black splash grew and spread, shooting out ramifications this way and that, now banking itself against rising ground, now pouring swiftly over a crest into a new-found valley, exactly as a gout of ink would spread itself upon blotting-paper.

And beyond, over the blue hills that rise southward of the river, the glittering Martians went to and fro, calmly and methodically spreading their poison-cloud over this patch of country, and then over that, laying it again with their steam-jets when it had served its purpose, and taking possession of the conquered country. They do not seem to have aimed at extermination so much as at complete demoralization and the destruction of any opposition. They exploded any stores of powder they came upon, cut every telegraph, and wrecked the railways here and there. They were hamstringing mankind. They seemed in no hurry to extend the field of operations, and they did not come beyond the central part of London all that day. It is possible that a very considerable number of people in London stuck to their houses through Monday morning. Certain it is that many died at home, suffocated by the black smoke.

I have not space to tell you here of my adventures during the days that followed—of how I saw men caught for the Martians' food, of how the third falling star smashed the house where I was resting, and of what I saw while I was hiding there. When I came out into the air again I found about me the landscape, weird and lurid, of another planet. Everywhere spread the red weed, whose seed the Martians had brought with them. All round were red cactus-shaped plants, knee-high, without a solitary terrestrial growth to dispute their footing. The trees near me were dead and brown, but further, a network of red threads scaled the still living stems. I went on my way to Hampstead through scarlet and crimson trees; it was like walking through an avenue of gigantic blood-drops.

IV.

HOW THE MARTIANS WERE SLAIN.

It was near South Kensington that I first heard the howling. It crept almost imperceptibly upon my senses. It was a sobbing alternation of two notes, "Ulla, ulla, ulla, ulla," keeping on perpetually. I stopped, wondering at this strange, remote wailing. It was as if that mighty desert of houses had found a voice for its fear and solitude. It was not until I emerged from Baker Street that I saw, far away over the trees in the clearness of the sunset, the hood of the Martian giant from which this howling proceeded. I watched him for some time, but he did not move.

I came upon the wrecked handling machine halfway to St. John's Wood Station. At first I thought a house had fallen across the road. It was only as I clambered among the ruins that I saw, with a start, this mechanical Samson lying, with its tentacles bent and smashed and twisted, among the ruins it had made. The fore part was shattered. It seemed as if it had driven blindly straight at the house, and had been overwhelmed in its overthrow.

A little beyond the ruins about the smashed handling machine I came upon the red weed again, and found Regent's Canal a spongy mass of dark red vegetation.

The dusky houses about me stood faint and tall and dim; the trees towards the park were growing black. All about me the red weed clambered among the ruins, writhing to get above me in the dim. Night, the mother of fear and mystery, was coming upon me. London gazed at me spectrally. The windows in the white houses were like the eye-sockets of skulls. About me my imagination found a thousand noiseless

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enemies moving. Terror seized me, a horror of my temerity. Far away, I saw a second Martian, motionless as the first, standing in the park towards the Zoological Gardens, and silent.

An insane resolve possessed me. I would die and end it. And I would save myself even the trouble of killing myself. I marched on recklessly towards this Titan, and then, as I drew nearer and the light grew, I saw that a multitude of black birds was circling and clustering about the hood. At that my heart gave a bound, and I began running along the road. Great mounds had been heaped about the crest of the hill, making a huge redoubt of it. It was the final and largest place the Martians made. And from behind these heaps there rose a thin smoke against the sky. Against the skyline an eager dog ran and disappeared. The thought that had flashed into my mind grew real, grew credible. I felt no fear, only a wild, trembling exultation, as I ran up the hill towards the motionless monster. Out of the hood hung lank shreds of brown at which the hungry birds pecked and tore.

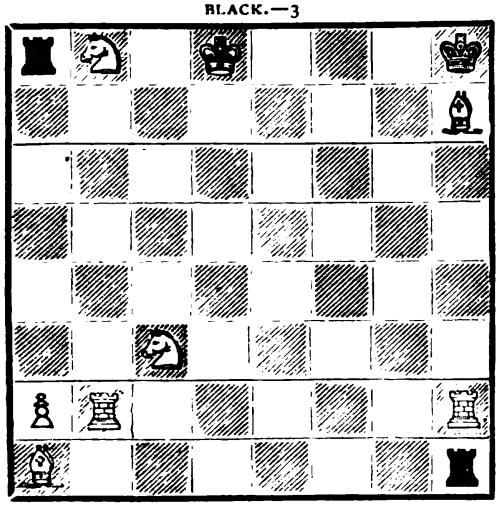
In another moment I had scrambled up the earthen rampart and stood upon its crest, and the interior of the redoubt was below me. A mighty space it was, with gigantic machines here and there within it, huge mounds of material and strange shelter places. And, scattered about it, some in their overturned war-machines, some in the now rigid handling machines, and a dozen of them stark and silent and laid in a row, were the Martians—*dead !*—slain by the putrefactive and disease bacteria against which their systems were unprepared ; slain as the red weed was being slain ; slain, after all man's devices had failed, by the humblest things that God, in His wisdom, had put upon this earth.

Already when I watched them they were irrevocably doomed, dying and rotting even as they went to and fro. It was inevitable. By the toll of a billion deaths man has bought his birthright of the earth, and it is his against all comers ; it would still be his were the Martians ten times as mighty as they are. For neither do men live nor die in vain.

CHESS CURIOSITIES.

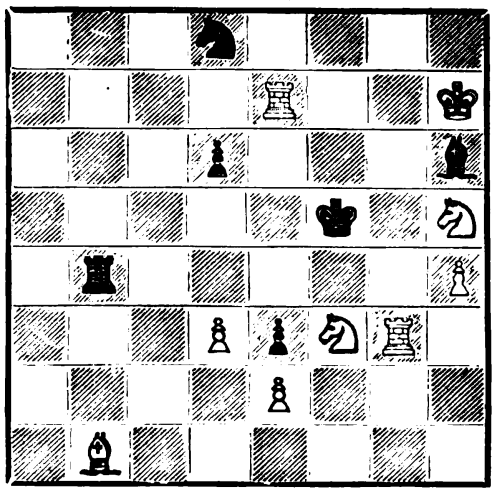
By T. B. ROWLAND.

BLACK.—3



WHITE.—8.

BLACK.—6.



WHITE.—9.

In each White is to play and mate in two moves.

IN the first problem the White rook has command of fourteen squares and gives a mate on each. It cannot command more or give a greater number of mates at any time. In the second the Black rook also commands the maximum number of squares, and causes White to vary his play seven times.

(*Solutions next month.*)

SOLUTIONS TO JANUARY PROBLEMS.

No. 1.—1. Kt to Kt 6 ; eighteen variations. No. 2.—1. Kt takes P ; eight variations.

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OLD FRANK SEES IT THROUGH

By Samuel A. Derieux

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM PEDDIE

IT was with grave misgiving that old Frank, Irish setter, followed little Tommy Earle out of the big shaded garden and into the hot field of rustling corn. He knew well enough that this morning, of all mornings, the boy ought to stay in the garden; but all his efforts to keep him there had failed. He had tried to divert his mind. He had loitered behind. He had run back to the big white house, hoping, in the absence of the boy's father and mother, to attract the attention of old Aunt Cindy to the fact that Tommy was running away.

But there was no one to catch his signals of distress. And no one knew what he knew—that strangers were camped down there in his master's woods. As for him, he had smelled them the night before. He had barked a while in their general direction, then gone down there to investigate. They had not seen him, for he had kept out of sight. There had been two men and a woman sitting by a small fire, with an old car in the background. He had not liked their looks.

And that wasn't all. Not long ago he had seen one of the men, half hidden in the cornfield, looking toward the house. The man had stood there while Steve Earle, the boy's father, drove off in the motor. He had stood there while Marian Earle, the boy's mother, went away with a basket of fruit for a neighbour. He had stood there until Frank had started toward the cornfield, tail erect, eyes fierce. Then the man had turned hurriedly and gone back to the woods.

But the strangers were still down there. Frank's nose told him that. Therefore his eyes were deep with trouble as he followed close at the boy's heels. Tommy's objective he knew well enough. A few days before Steve Earle had taken them both through this very corn into the woods, to the creek, and had shown the boy the silvery fish in a deep-shaded pool. It had made a great impression; Tommy was going to see those fish now. That Frank knew.

In ordinary circumstances he was not averse to looking at fish himself. But now, with every step his anxiety increased. For it was beside the pool that the strangers were camped. And it was straight in their direction that Tommy was headed.

Within sight of the woods Frank made his last attempt. He stopped and sat down firmly on his haunches. Then the boy turned, his little face flushed under the white hat.

"Come on, F'ank!" he said, impatiently.

Panting hard, saliva dripping into the dust of the corn row, Frank sat where he was and looked everywhere but at the boy.

"Sit there, then!" said Tommy. "I'm goin'!"

He went, and Frank went too; for obedience, even against his judgment, is the penalty a dog has to pay who loves a boy—and will die for him if need be.

It seemed dark in the woods, like passing from out of doors into the cool-shaded living-room at home. Here and there shafts of sunlight touched the leaves and tree-trunks with silver spots. Down the wooded slope the boy went, until suddenly he stopped, breathless, Frank beside him with pricked ears. At the same time the two burly men at work on the car down there by the pool glanced quickly around.

A moment they stared; then they began to talk low, excitedly. The woman came round from the other side of the car. She was young, slim, strong; she, too, glanced at boy and dog, then joined the talk of the men. "No! No!" she cried. But they brushed her aside. She ran quickly back to them; they brushed her aside again. Finally one of them pushed her into the car and got in himself. The other man came forward, a smirking smile on his heavy red face.

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Frank's challenging eyes were raised to the man's face. But Tommy, looking up with that eagerness to trust common to all young things, from children to puppies, answered the man's questions in his clear, boy's voice. Many times before, in shops, at country fairs, strangers had stopped thus to talk to him, had asked him who he was, where he lived, if his dog would bite.

"We got lots of things in the car," the man was saying. "Apples. Peaches. Circus things. We been to a circus. Did you see the lady?"

"Yes!" said Tommy, his eyes big.

"Well, you come along with me. The lady wants to show you them circus things."

Just a moment Tommy hesitated, looking wistfully into the smirking face and into the narrowed eyes that somehow frightened him. Then he glanced toward the car and smiled in ecstasy. That rolled-up tent strapped on behind was striped red and white like tents at the fair. The woods became suddenly alive with romance, luring him on. He hesitated no longer; he went with the man; close behind, panting, followed old Frank.

The other man, on the front seat, his hand on the wheel, glanced over his shoulder as they approached. In his wide-brimmed hat he looked like the man who stands in front of tents and shouts for people to come in and see. Half concealed by the curtains and by bundles, the woman, her face strangely white except for the red spots on her cheeks, sat on the back seat. Valises and suit-cases with gaudy things sticking out of them were strapped here and there to the car. Tommy stopped and stared in wonderment at this travelling splendour. Close beside him stood old Frank, fierce-eyed, wise, suffering.

"Get in, son," said the man at the wheel. "We're goin' to take you to your ma. You ain't got no business down here in the woods alone."

"Is—is F'ank goin'?"

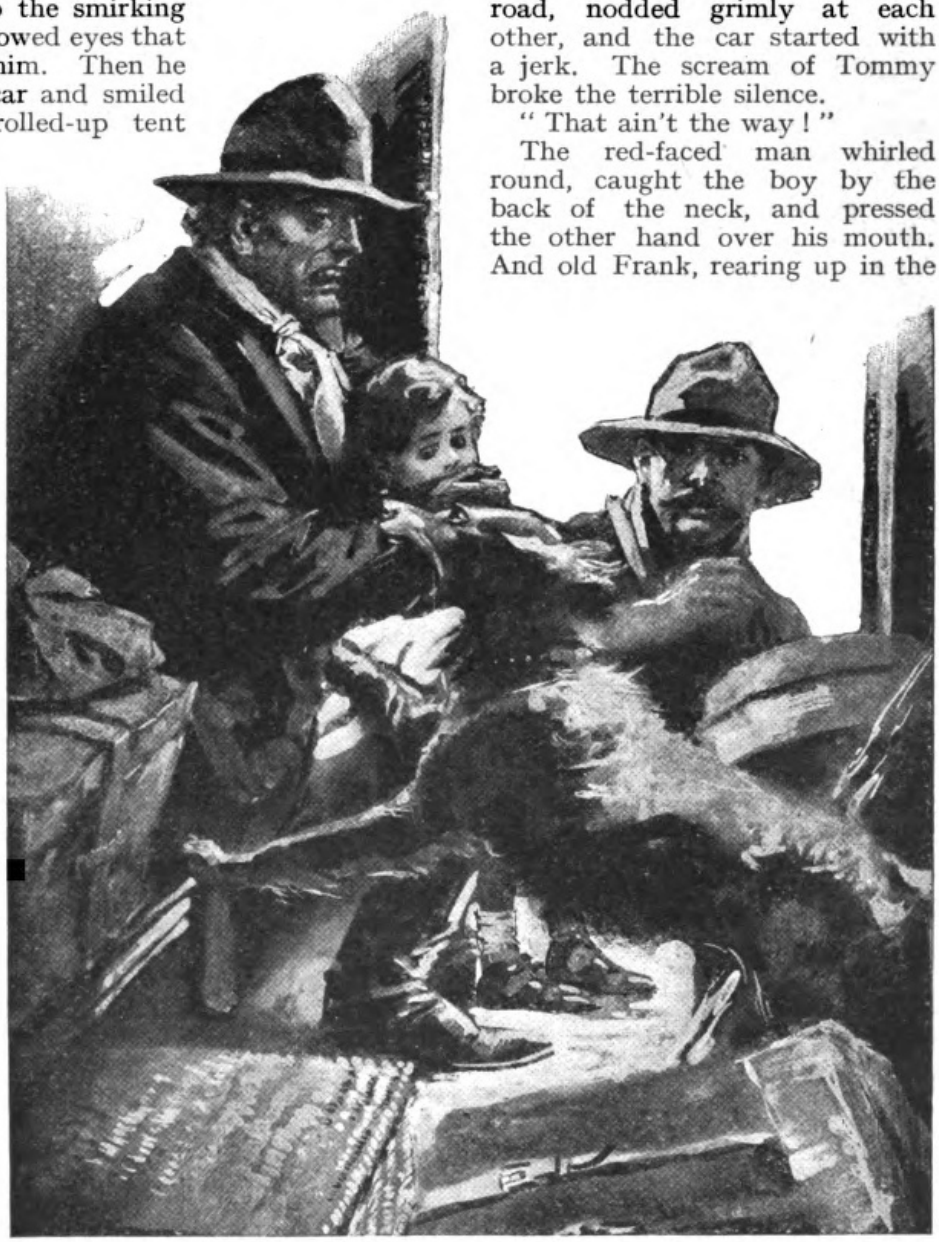
"Of course. Let the dog in, Bill!"

The red-faced man slammed the door on boy and dog, and clambered into the front seat. The lumbered car lurched along the unused wood road. It was stifling hot with the curtains down, but old Frank was panting with more than heat.

Just ahead, the big road came into sight, shining in the sun. The car stopped. The men looked up and down the road, nodded grimly at each other, and the car started with a jerk. The scream of Tommy broke the terrible silence.

"That ain't the way!"

The red-faced man whirled round, caught the boy by the back of the neck, and pressed the other hand over his mouth. And old Frank, rearing up in the



"THE RED-FACED MAN CAUGHT THE BOY BY THE BACK OF THE NECK AND PRESSED HIS HAND OVER HIS MOUTH. AND OLD FRANK, REARING UP IN THE CROWDED CONFUSION, BURIED HIS SHINING FANGS DEEP IN THAT HAND AND WRIST."

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crowded confusion, buried his shining fangs deep in that hand and wrist. The other man sprang out of the car, jerked the door open, and caught him by both hind legs.

"Don't stick him, Bill!" he gasped. "They'll find his body. Let him go home!"

Snarling, writhing, fighting, the dog was dragged out and hurled into the road. A savage kick sent him tumbling backward, the man sprang once more into the front seat, and the car darted away, Frank after it, barking hoarsely, his mouth flecked with blood-stained foam, the road flying dizzily beneath him.

All that blazing August day he followed the car. Where he could, he stayed in the woods, running parallel to the road like a swift, silent outrider. At open places he lagged shrewdly behind; by short cuts through fields, by spurts of speed at the next patch of woods, he caught up again. It was an old trick and a simple one; he had played it often before; but never, as now, with such gnawing anxiety, such bewilderment and rage in his heart.

Once, lumbering old rattletrap though it was, the car left him far behind. Then, as he raced frantically along the dusty road under the fierce sun that beat down on his heavy red coat, his eyes were like a mad dog's eyes. But from the top of a long hill over which it had disappeared he glimpsed it again in the distance—glimpsed it just as it turned clumsily out of the highway and pointed its nose toward the distant mountains.

After this it was easy. Up and down hill, just ahead of him, the car wallowed laboriously in the rough road. A seasoned sporting dog, like old Frank, has the endurance of a wolf. On hunting trips with his master he had often covered more than a hundred miles a day; but the heat and those first flying miles, when the car was speeding, had almost exhausted him, and he was grateful now for the shade and for the mountain streams into which he plunged to cool his boiling blood. Noon passed without a halt. The sultry afternoon wore on. And still the big setter followed in the shelter of the trees which shut in the road. To show himself meant death. And Tommy needed him alive, not dead.

The car turned out of the road at last. It bumped a while through woods, stopped, and he sank down behind a bush. The sun had just set. For miles they had not passed a house.

The men, stiff, dusty, hot, got out. The heavy man's hand was bandaged. Then the woman got out, then the boy. A great, trembling desire seized the dog to rush forward, to let the boy know he was there. Every muscle quivered. But one of the men pulled a shot-gun out of the car, and the dog bowed his head between his paws in a sort of shame. That was the symbol of his helplessness. That was what stood between his fangs and those men's throats.

He watched them unstrap the tent and drag it off to the depths of a thicket. Valises, telescopes, all the cheap pageantry of their trade, went the same way. They were staking everything on the prize that had walked into their hands that morning, coming like a little prince from that big white house surrounded by broad fields rich with corn.

At last the man who had driven the car picked up the gun. The woman took the boy by the hand, but he drew back, looking up at her and holding to his hat. She spoke to him low and huskily, her face white. Then, as he perforce went with her, Frank heard him crying in the woods, heard the convulsive catches of his voice, saw the twinkle, through the trees, of white socks above reluctant sandalled feet.

Eyes sullen and fierce, he rose and followed, hidden by the bushes and trees. Down the hill where a creek gurgled, the man with the gun turned. He was hard-jawed, pale-eyed.

"Shut up!" he said to the boy.

The convulsive sobs went on.

"Shut up!"

A few steps the dog rushed forward, hair risen all the way down his back. Then he sank down on the ground; for the woman had dropped the bundles and was on her knees before the boy, her arm about his heaving shoulders. Her voice rang through the woods, husky and shrill.

"He can't help it, Joe!"

The crying had stopped now. But the sturdy little chest was still rising and falling as the boy stood looking up with quivering face at the man. The woman picked up her bundles, rose, and took his hand once more. Still holding to his hat, he went with her, in silence now, taking two little trotting steps to one of hers.

They spent the night in the woods, out of hearing of any chance passer-by along the road. Carefully hidden in the underbrush, old Frank watched them. Only once did he leave them. Then he went to the car, found a big chunk of meat wrapped in a paper under the back seat, made his meal off his enemies, and came guardedly back, licking his chops. They were gone again before day. The rising sun found the car toiling upward into the echoing depths of the mountains. Just round the last bend in the road followed old Frank.

Sometimes he stopped to drink at streams that came slipping down green walls of rock.

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His tongue hung out; he was gaunt, dust-covered, weary-eyed. The few mountaineers he passed looked at him with narrow suspicion, then back up the winding road where that curtained car had disappeared. With just a glance up into their faces, he galloped on.

But when another car, long, black, shining, like the one at home, swung suddenly round the bend just ahead, he stopped short. The weariness left his eyes, the stiffness went out of his muscles, his heart gave a great bound. Four sportsmen, such as he and his master associated with, bobbed comfortably up and down in the capacious seats. Their fishing-rods were strapped to the side. He saw the twinkle in their eyes as they stopped.

"What's up, old man?" they asked.

Maybe he got a bit rattled. Anyway, he failed. He ran up the road in the direction of that other car, wheeled, and ran back. He jumped up on the step with his front paws, he looked up with pleading eyes from one face to another.

"Those folk left him behind," they said.

They assured him that it was a shame to treat a good old dog that way, but that he could catch up if he kept plugging. They threw him something to eat, wished him good luck, and left him standing in the road, looking after them with disconsolate eyes.

After he had eaten the food and taken up his solitary pursuit he heard far below the sound of their car. Even their voices floated up to him.

"I tell you," said one, "it was an S.O.S.! We ought to have followed him. Something queer about that car."

But they were gone, for all that, like the friends who, whether we be man or woman or dog, daily pass us by, willing to help if they only understood.

It was dusk when he caught up. The car had reached the top of the range it had been climbing all day. From behind a bush he watched it turn out of the road. Like some mammoth beast astray it bumped and swayed across a desolate field to a black thicket of stunted pines, huddled densely together. On the side of the thicket away from the road the car stopped, and old Frank crept into the pines and lay down. The men got out, then the woman, then the boy.

He saw Tommy looking about in bewilderment at this roof of the world, on which, a lonely little figure, he stood close to the woman. Again the longing seized the dog to rush forward to let the boy know he, too, was here. But there were the men close by; and in the car was the gun. Again he bowed his head between his paws, and his eyes were deep with trouble.

Suddenly the man who had driven the car turned. He glanced at the woman and the boy, then toward the road.

"Here—you get back in that car, kid!" he said.

Tommy's face was white in the dusk, and he held tight to the skirt of the woman.

"Did you hear me?"

"He's dead tired, Joe," snapped the woman.

The man took a sudden, threatening step forward. In the thicket Frank rose quivering to his feet. But with a quick movement the woman had pushed the boy behind her.

"Don't you touch him, Joe!" she flashed. A moment she stood facing him, slim and defiant, in the dusk. Then she took the boy's hand and they went back to the car.

Suddenly Frank rose on his front legs, ears thrown back, eyes glowing wildly. It seemed to him that the boy had looked straight into the bushes where he lay. Certainly for a moment he had pulled back on the woman's hand. Then he went on with her and they got into the car. But Frank still sat on his haunches, panting and choking and panting again.

At last he crept along the edge of the thicket and lay there close to the car, but still hidden. That glimpse into the boy's face had almost undone him. He wanted to go to the car, to scratch at the curtains. But yonder, a hundred feet away, back and forth before a fire they had built, moved the men. And against the box they had taken from the car leaned the gun.

He heard the voice of the woman, low, confidential, assuring, and his ears flattened with gratitude and trust. The man wouldn't hurt him, she was telling the boy. Sometimes he talked to everybody that way. He was an old grouser, that's what he was. She whispered something.

"To-morrow?" the boy asked, eagerly.

"Hush! Yes. That's it—to-morrow!"

"Did F'ank go home, Nita?"

"Of course he went home."

"I saw a dog in the bushes!"

The woman laughed. "You're seeing things, old chap. What about some supper?"

She got out of the car and went quickly to the fire. Without a word to the men she gathered up something to eat and came quickly back. Even in the darkness Frank could see the light in her eyes.

The boy must have gone to sleep soon after that. The moon, big, weird, solemn, rose slowly over a parallel range of mountains. Presently the heavy man got up, skirted the thicket, and stumbled off across the field toward the road. The smell of him polluted the air no more. Then the woman came quietly out of the car and joined the other man at the fire.

"Where's he gone?" she asked.

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"To get the lie of the land ahead."

"Joe!"

"Well?"

"I don't like this job, Joe!"

He said nothing, and she talked on, her voice low. Still he said nothing. Then she went over to him, sat down beside him, took his hands in hers. "Let's take him home!" she pleaded. "Let's make a clean breast of it. Let's be straight. They'll give us a chance—I know they will. They're like the kid—white. Let's turn round right now. I promised him we'd take him home to-morrow. Joe, I'd rather be dead than go on!"

She rose when he rose, clinging to him; but he threw her off. "I'm tired of this!" he cried. "We're in this thing and we're goin' to see it through The daddy'll pay up, or I'll wring the brat's neck."

"Oh!" she screamed.

She stared at him with white face, full of horror and fear and loathing. She turned and stumbled toward the car; the curtains closed upon her. Far in the night Frank heard her sobbing to herself.



"WITH A QUICK MOVEMENT THE WOMAN HAD PUSHED THE BOY BEHIND HER. 'DON'T YOU TOUCH HIM, JOE!' SHE FLASHED."

His eyes were green with hatred as he followed the car next day. A few crumbs of bread from the deserted camping place, a taste of potted meat from a can he held fiercely between his paws while he licked the inside, had made his meagre breakfast. There were times that day when, if the men had looked behind, they must have seen him. There were times when he would not have cared if they had. Wearily he trotted or loped along, tongue lolling out, collar loose on his neck. So another day wore on and afternoon came. Then the car stopped, and again instinctively he turned aside into the bushes.

Suddenly his panting ceased, he raised his head, and pricked his ears. From the

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valley below had come the smell of human habitations and the faint tinkle of a cow-bell. Eyes bright in an instant, he watched the men climb stiffly out of the car ahead. They talked for a while, looking up and down the rough road they had been following, then down a shaded road that led pleasantly to the valley below.

" There ain't a drop of petrol left," said the man who had driven the car. " It's the last chance for fifty miles."

He pulled a big can out of the car, then he parted the curtains.

" See here, kid—you keep quiet. Hear ? "

No sound came from within.

" Did you hear me ? "

The voice sounded muffled in a sort of sob.

" Yes, sir ! "

" All right. Remember ! I'm coming back."

" You drive up to them bushes and wait," he said to his companion. Then, putting into his hip-pocket something that flashed brilliantly, even pleasantly, in the sun, he picked up the can and started down the shaded road. The dog, fierce eyes shrewd, hair risen all the way down his gaunt back, rose guardedly, crept through the bushes, and followed.

Old Frank had been a companion of men all his days. He had hunted with them, shared their food and fire, looked up with steady, open eyes into their faces. He had never had a human enemy before. But now he stalked this man as his ancestors had stalked big game—muscles tense, head low between gaunt shoulder-blades, eyes hard and bloodshot. When the man turned he would rush forward and spring at his throat.

But the man hurried on. And thus they came suddenly out of the wilderness into a village street. At the end of the street rose the white columns of a building with a big, black, dust-covered car in front. Women in white, children with nurses, were abroad in the coolness of the afternoon. It was the busy season, when the heat of the cities drives people to the fresh air of the mountains.

Through this holiday crowd went the red-faced, dusty man. Twenty paces behind followed the gaunt Irish setter. People stopped in the street to look back at him. Children pulled their nurses' hands, thrilling to make friends with such a big dog, then pulled back, distrustful of the look in his eyes. Next to the chemist's was a garage. About the entrance loitered a group of men. One was bigger than the rest, and wore a wide-brimmed hat.

Through this group pushed the man with the can, and close behind now followed the gaunt Irish setter. It happened quickly, like one of those mountain tragedies that brood over such places, remnants of feuds that hang on to the skirts of civilization. Two muffled pistol-shots broke the peace and security of the village, and brought men running to the garage. For the man with the can had turned at last, and Frank had sprung straight at his throat.

From the confusion came the hoarse shout, " Leave me alone ! Let me kill that dog ! He's mad ! "

" I've got the dog all right ! " cried the big man in the broad-brimmed hat. " If he's mad I'll tend to him ! "

Plunging, barking, begging to be turned loose, old Frank was dragged backward across the cement floor. In the door of a glass-enclosed office the big man, holding tight to his collar, turned.

" Here—you—Sam ! " he panted. " Run to the hotel. Tell Mr. Earle—the gentleman that just came with his wife—we got a man down here and a red Irish setter. Quick ! Catch him before he leaves ! "

Then they were in the office, the door was shut, the big man still holding to the dog's collar. He was quiet now. But the blood that dripped slowly on the floor was no redder than his eyes. The door opened and he plunged forward. But it was a stranger—a young man with a star on his coat.

" Sam got 'em, Sheriff," he said ; " they're comin'. Shall I bring the man in here ? "

" No. Keep him out there. This fellow's still seein' red."

" Hit ? "

" Ear. That's all."

" Well, he left his mark on that devil all right ! "

The young man went out. Still the sheriff held to the dog's collar. Still through the glass windows the crowd stared in. But suddenly it parted, and then Frank saw them.

" Hold on ! " panted the sheriff. " No use to tear the house down. They'll be in here in a minute ! "

The door opened, they were in the office, the sheriff had turned him loose. He was jumping up against his tall master, long ears thrown back, upraised eyes aglow, heart pounding against his lean ribs. But it was the look in his young mistress's eyes that brought him down to the floor before her in sudden recollection, that went straight to his heart, that set him all a-tremble with choking eagerness.

" Take us to him, Frank ! " she gasped.

He led them, master and mistress and officers, out of the town, up the shaded road across which slanting sunbeams gently sifted. He led them to that car he had followed secretly through the days and watched without sleep through the nights. Only his master's low-voiced command held him back with them.

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"PLUNGING, BARKING, BEGGING TO BE TURNED LOOSE, OLD FRANK WAS DRAGGED BACKWARDS ACROSS THE FLOOR."

"Steady, Frank! Steady, old man!"

But they must have made some noise, quiet as they tried to be. For before they reached the car the heavy man scrambled out, stared for a moment in stupid bewilderment, then threw both hands high up over his head.

"Don't shoot!" he pleaded, hoarsely. "We ain't done the kid no harm!"

Then it was that Frank broke away and rushed at last to that curtained car. With shining eyes he sprang into the front, over the seat, into the rear. Tommy's arms were about his neck, Tommy was crying over and over to the woman, all out of breath:—

"It's F'ank, Nita! He didn't go home. I saw him in the bushes!"

"It's your mother, too," she said. She tried to smile. "I told you it would be to-day—didn't I?" She snatched him to her and kissed him fiercely. She opened the door. "Good-bye, old chap!" she whispered.

Outside the car old Frank stood by, quivering with pride, while the boy passed from the mother's into the father's arms. He saw the light in their faces, the flash of the sun on the boy's curls, the smiles of the officers who looked on. Then the shadow of terrible days and nights fell across his happiness, and for the second time that day he saw red. For the woman had stepped

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out of the car, and the big sheriff had caught her by the arm.

The dog glanced up into the faces about him. But none of them had seen. He ran to the woman; he took his stand beside her, looking up at the sheriff with fierce, pleading eyes. But the sheriff still held her arm, and the dog growled, partly in anger, partly in trouble. Then Tommy saw, too. He wriggled loose from his father; he came running to their help.

"Let go of her!" he screamed, and caught the woman's skirt with both hands. "Daddy, make him let her go!"

But it was his mother who understood, who came to them with shining face and caught the woman by both hands. Frank knew it was all right now, even when the woman sank down on the car-step and sobbed brokenly, her face buried in her hands. For the sheriff had stepped back, and his mistress was at the woman's side, an arm about her shoulder.

That night Frank lay in the crowded lobby of the hotel, ears pricked toward the dining-room door. He had already had his supper.

"Two big steaks—raw," Steve Earle had said.

"And a big dish of ice-cream," Marian Earle had added, with a smile, for old Frank was an epicurean in his way.

And now the sheriff was telling the crowd about him.

"He followed that car for two hundred miles. That was nothing! Been hunting all his life. But he kept out of sight—that's the thing. They never saw him. And he never left them. That's what put us on the trail. Some men fishing in the mountains passed him. He tried to signal 'em. Yes, sir—that's what he tried to do. But they didn't catch on. Next day they read in the papers about a boy and an Irish setter being lost. Then they understood, and telephoned Mr. Earle."

"The woman that came in with the mother and went upstairs with her," asked a man, "who's she?"

The big sheriff took the cigar out of his mouth and looked at the questioner with narrow, disapproving eyes.

"She didn't have a thing to do with it, sir!" he declared.

From the dining-room came the sound of chairs pushed back, and Frank rose to his feet. He met them at the door, he stood beside the boy while the people gathered around, he went upstairs with them, the boy holding tight to his heavy red mane.

"That old Joe!" Tommy was saying as they went down the hall. "He can't get us any more. The sheriff he locked him up in a jail. He can't get Nita, either. She's going home to live with us. Mummy says so!"

He was still talking, his eyes big, when they went into a bright-lighted room where a little bed sat beside a big one. He was still talking while his mother undressed him. Then before he got into bed a spasm of virtuous reaction seized him. He and Frank were never going to leave the garden any more, he declared. They were never going to get in any more motors with people!

"No," smiled Earle from his great height, "I think you're cured, old man!"

The rug beside Tommy's bed was very soft, and Frank was very tired. But some time in the silent darkness of that night he barked hoarsely in the agony of a dream. For they were on top of a mountain, and a weird moon had risen and a woman had screamed.

BRIDGE PROBLEM.

By MAJOR BROWNING.

Hearts—7, 3.
Spades—Queen, 6.
Clubs—King, queen, 10, 9.

Hearts—Knave.
Spades—None.
Clubs—Knave, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 2.

B
Y Z
A

Hearts—10, 9.
Spades—King, knave, 9, 8.
Clubs—Ace, 3.

Hearts—Ace, queen, 8, 4.
Spades—Ace, 7, 5, 4.
Clubs—None.

Hearts are trumps. A to lead. A B to make six tricks against any defence.

SOLUTION NEXT MONTH.

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This case is regarded by criminologists as in many respects the strangest on record.

The PARKMAN MURDER MYSTERY

By C. O'MAHONY

ILLUSTRATED BY DUDLEY TENNANT



Dr. J. W. WEBSTER.

"IN THE GALLERY OF SCOUNDRELS THE HARVARD PROFESSOR IS UNIQUE."

WHEN Dickens visited Boston in 1842, amongst the eminent men who were presented to him was John White Webster, a distinguished graduate of Harvard, and a man who had personality and charm as well as considerable intellectual gifts. He was very fond of entertaining, and it must have afforded him the keenest pleasure to have been a participator in the programme drawn up by the generous Bostonians in honour of the great English novelist. In that city of sound learning and profound scholarship J. W. Webster, M.A., M.D., Ewing Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy in Harvard University, member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, of the London Geological Society, and of the St. Petersburg Mineralogical Society, was not the least of a community which contained some of the most renowned persons in the United States. Dickens doubtless forgot all about Dr. Webster when he left Boston, but twenty-five years later the novelist made a special pilgrimage to the Medical College in Grove Street to inspect the *locus* of the crime which in the meantime had given the professor an unhappy notoriety. For the genial doctor, the popular society man, the cultured scientist, and the indulgent parent committed one of the most fiendish murders to be found in the long and dark annals of crime. We have had his prototype in Great Britain, but, after all, Palmer and Pritchard were tenth-rate practitioners, provincial sciolists who had no pretensions to Dr. Webster's attainments, and in the gallery of scoundrels the Harvard professor is unique.

The root cause of Webster's downfall was extravagance. The pursuit of science seldom results in the overtaking of a fortune, and the professor, heedless of this, lived at a rate which threatened bankruptcy. Conscious of his superiority, he wished for opportunities to emphasize it, and, consequently, he was in the habit of giving dinner-parties at his pleasant residence at Cambridge, a suburb of Boston, and taking the lead socially when the Medical College did not claim his services. As he had no private means, and as his earnings prohibited extravagance, Webster was never out of debt. He borrowed from friends and acquaintances, and, knowing that he was dealing with men of honour, he bound each of them to secrecy, and in this way managed to maintain his reputation.

Almost the first person he approached with a request for a loan was Dr. George Parkman, who practised medicine at 8, Walnut Street, Boston. The latter's brother, Dr. Francis Parkman, was a well-known preacher, and Webster was not only one of his parishioners but a close personal friend. George Parkman, who was passionately attached to the products of the United States Mint, did not refuse the professor's request, believing that it provided him with a safe investment. What interest he extracted is not known, but the lender was too fond of money to be likely to lend any without a profit. In 1842 he began to advance moderate amounts to Webster, who repaid and borrowed again, and gave Dr. Parkman to understand that he borrowed from no one else. But there were always crises in the Webster *ménage*, and the harassed professor often had to appeal to others to save him from extinction.

For more than six years Webster led this

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double life. Never absent from his place in the Medical College, he was regarded as a model teacher and worthy of his distinguished position. His lectures were well attended and his researches characteristic of the inquiring scholar. It was nothing unusual for Professor Webster to lock himself in his laboratory for many hours whilst he experimented. He had a special suite of rooms reserved for his own exclusive use at the college, and they contained so many dangerous chemicals that they were very rarely entered by strangers.

In the early autumn of 1849 Professor Webster's position was apparently an enviable one, but for all that he must have daily expected an explosion under his feet. He must have been well aware that the tall, sallow-skinned Dr. Parkman, pigeon-chested and with legs and arms like sticks, would not be satisfied with excuses much longer. Parkman was the one man of whom the professor was afraid.

The final crisis originated in a most trivial incident. One day Dr. Parkman and his brother-in-law, Mr. Shaw, passed Webster in the street and, reminded of his personality, started to discuss him.

"By the way," said Shaw, who was a well-to-do merchant, "what salary does Dr. Webster get at Harvard?'

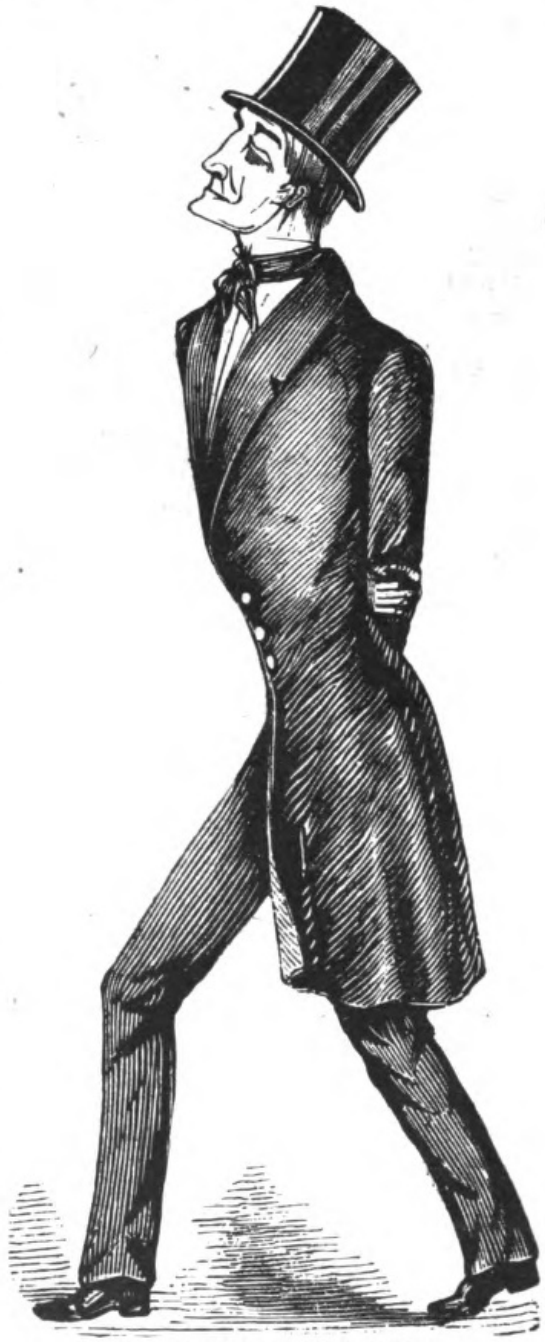
"Twelve hundred dollars a year," answered Parkman, who was only too well acquainted with the professor's financial position.

"That's not enough," Shaw exclaimed, with warmth. "No wonder he's had to mortgage his collection of minerals to me for a sum equal to his annual salary. I'm not surprised he's hard up."

"What do you mean?" said Parkman, sharply. "If Webster has given you his cabinet of minerals he had no right to, for I've already got a mortgage on them and, in fact, on all he possesses."

The news startled the merchant, and when his brother-in-law insisted upon taking him to his house in Walnut Street and showing him the papers in Dr. Webster's handwriting, giving him—Dr. Parkman—all his property as security for money lent, he realized that the smooth-tongued professor had committed a criminal act. But he was good-natured and easy-going, and he never had any intention of taking advantage of his discovery to compel his debtor to return the twelve hundred dollars. Not so, however, Dr. Parkman. He was infuriated, and there and then he declared that he would call on Webster and give him "a piece of his mind."

There is no doubt of the fact that Parkman and Webster had a stormy interview in the latter's rooms at the Medical College, and that the doctor threatened to expose the professor and ruin him if he did not pay back the borrowed money. Parkman could have caused Webster's expulsion from Harvard by informing the President of the University of what had happened, and, of course, it was his duty to have done so, but, knowing that mere exposure would result in the loss of the hundreds of dollars he had advanced, he consented to wait a few months longer. For the honour of Harvard he ought to have suffered the loss of the



Dr. GEORGE PARKMAN.

"TALL, SALLOW-SKINNED, PIGEON-CHESTED, AND WITH LEGS AND ARMS LIKE STICKS."

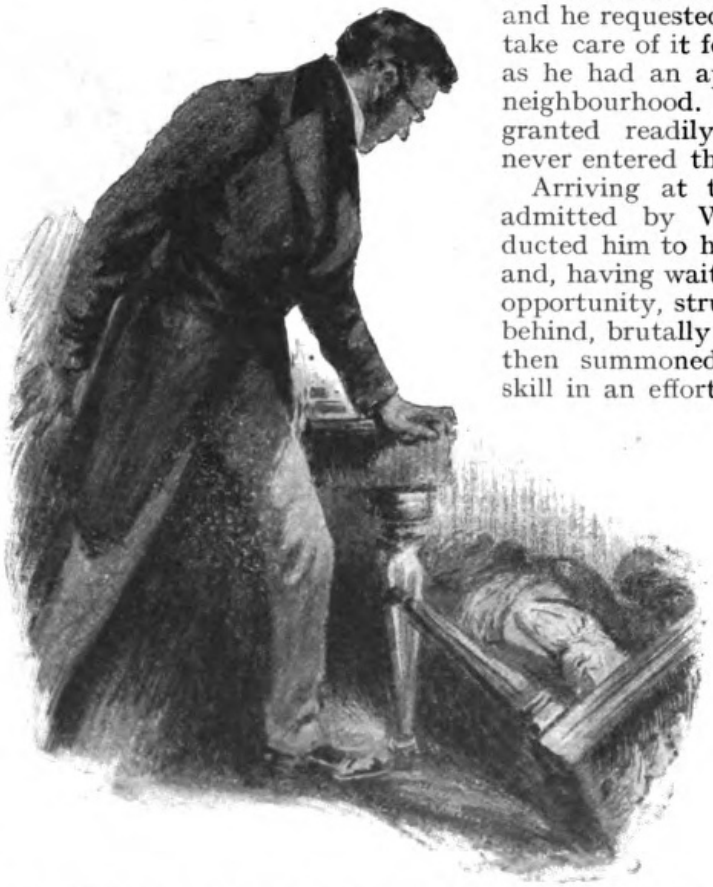
This portrait and that of Dr. Webster on the previous page are from one of the Boston papers at the time of the trial.

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comparatively trivial amount owed him, but Dr. Parkman's love of money made him forget his duty to his *alma mater* and pay the penalty with his life.

Webster was now in the depths. But even when danger threatened most he could not act honestly. When Parkman had taxed him with fraud and had threatened to have him removed from his post he had saved himself by promising to settle the account between them by handing over to Parkman the proceeds from the sale of the tickets admitting to his lectures. This was a special source of income which supplemented the small salary, and Parkman, who was able to estimate the amount likely to be received, agreed to stay his hand.

The anxious, grasping, implacable creditor, however, was destined to be deceived again, for Webster obtained the ticket-money from the agent and utilized it to settle another pressing debt. It was an act of madness on his part, but his brain must have been affected by worry at the time. Whatever the reason, as soon as Parkman learned how he had been outwitted he became infuriated, and, not content with calling the professor a swindler to his face, wrote down his opinion of him and sent it to the college by a special messenger.



"WEBSTER STRUCK HIM DOWN FROM BEHIND AND BRUTALLY MURDERED HIM."

From now onwards it was a battle of wits between the two men. They were physical as well as temperamental opposites, Webster big and burly, with massive forehead and genial expression; Parkman wizened and miserable-looking, despite his height, but shrill-voiced and threatening, aware that his knowledge of Webster's secret was the source of his strength. The debtor's only compensation was the realization that Parkman would not make public his fraud until he had abandoned all hope of being repaid.

A week of failure on Parkman's part to interview Webster was marked by a surprise visit from the professor himself. Apparently convinced that it would be dangerous to exacerbate his enemy, he astonished him by calling at his house in Walnut Street.

"If you will come to the Medical College at half-past one to-day," he said, coldly, "I will pay you every dollar I owe you."

Dr. Parkman was delighted, and expressed his intention of being punctual to the minute. The day was Friday, November 23rd, 1849, and at one o'clock all the students would leave the building and the professor would be the only occupant. But if Dr. Parkman thought of this it could not have struck him as being significant.

When he set out for the Medical College Parkman stopped at a greengrocer's to buy a lettuce for his invalid daughter, and he requested the shopkeeper to take care of it for him for an hour, as he had an appointment in the neighbourhood. His request was granted readily, but the doctor never entered that shop again.

Arriving at the college he was admitted by Webster, who conducted him to his own apartments, and, having waited for a favourable opportunity, struck him down from behind, brutally murdered him, and then summoned all his chemical skill in an effort to get rid of the body. For hours the professor worked, dismembering and boiling the body of his victim and bringing to his aid all the resources of medical science. The crime was committed not to save a few hundred dollars but to save his character, and it was the last desperate effort of a despairing man. It was in his favour that he was in the habit of remaining after the usual hours in his laboratory, and that it was not uncommon for him to keep the boiler fire going until midnight. Fully aware that he could not be convicted of murder unless the body was identified, he laboured to render it unrecognizable and to obliterate all traces of Dr. George Parkman as he had appeared in real life.

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That evening the murderer returned home and with his daughters went to a party in the neighbourhood. He would have preferred to spend the night in his laboratory, for, although a skilful chemist and anatomist, he was experiencing great difficulty in destroying the body of his victim; but the professor had to maintain his reputation for respectability at any cost and to pose before his acquaintances. On Sunday he attended church and listened to an eloquent sermon by the brother of the man he had murdered, and the same afternoon he informed the Rev. Dr. Parkman that his relative, whose disappearance had created a sensation, had called at the Medical College on the day he had been seen for the last time in Boston.

Webster had, of course, to act a part, but he overdid it. As an old friend of the Parkman family, he ought to have been more perturbed by the mystery than he appeared to be, but in all probability he was afraid of displaying emotion for fear it might be mistaken for remorse or terror.

Dr. Parkman's agent, Mr. Kingsley, was most active in the search, and he had come to the conclusion that the mystery began, if it did not end, in the building in Grove Street, for he had with infinite trouble and patience traced every movement of the missing man on Friday, November 23rd, until twenty minutes to two, when he had been seen close to the Medical College.

No one as yet suspected Professor Webster, however. Human nature is frail, but it seemed impossible that the popular Harvard teacher could use violence of any sort, and when he told the Rev. Dr. Parkman and Mr. Kingsley that he had paid Parkman some hundreds of dollars on the fatal Friday, and suggested that he had been murdered for it, there was a general inclination to believe him. There were, however, two exceptions. One was the agent, and the other Ephraim Littlefield, the college janitor, a sturdy servitor who had never liked the professor.

On the Monday following his crime the murderer came to the conclusion that he must keep the searchers away from Grove Street, and accordingly he wrote an anonymous letter to Francis Tukey, the City Marshal. Webster considered it a cunning move, but it was in reality a very stupid one. In all he wrote three letters, two purporting to come from the leader of a gang of roughs and a party of kidnappers, the last claiming to be the work of a respectable citizen disturbed by the mystery.

The first effort in illiteracy read :—

Dr. Sir,
You will find Dr. Parkman
Murdered on brooklynt
heights. yours, M.
Captain of the Darts.

The City Marshal was then favoured with another mysterious communication :—

Dr. Parkman was took
on Bord the ship herculun
and this is al I dare to say
as I shal be kild
Est Cambge, one of
the men
give me his watch
but I was feared to
keep it and throwd
it in the water rigt side
the road to the
Cam bige to
Bost.

The third letter showed no signs of such illiteracy :—

DEAR SIR,—I have been considerably interested in the recent affair of Dr. Parkman, and think I can recommend means, the adoption of which might result in bringing to light some of the mysteries connected with the disappearance of the afore-mentioned gentleman.

In the first place, with regard to the searching of houses, etc., I would recommend that particular attention be paid to the appearance of cellar floors; do they present the appearance of having been recently dug into and covered up again; or might not the part of the cellar where he was buried have been covered by piling of wood? Secondly, have the outhouses been carefully examined; have they been raked sufficiently?

Probably his body was cut up and placed in a stout bag, containing heavy weights, and thrown off one of the bridges—perhaps Craigie's. And I would recommend the firing of cannon from some of these bridges, and from various parts of the harbour and river, in order to cause the parts of the body to rise to the surface of the water. This, I think, will be the last resort, and it should be done effectually.

And I recommend that the cellars of the houses in East Cambridge should be examined.

Yours respectfully, CIVIS.

All three letters were put in at the trial and declared by handwriting experts to be the work of Dr. Webster.

The excitement in Boston when the news of Dr. Parkman's disappearance was published was intense. He was a "character," and, if not popular, was at any rate respected. Search parties were organized; the city offered a reward of a thousand dollars for information, to which the family added three thousand. It became the sole topic of conversation, and one of the few men who could discuss it calmly was Professor Webster. The general belief that his old friend was murdered scarcely affected him, and he remained the same hard-working scholar and teacher.

But Ephraim Littlefield's suspicions could not be killed, although, when he broached them to Dr. Jackson and Dr. Bigelow, two

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of the professors of Harvard, they implored him to be careful. The janitor, seeing that he must produce some sort of proof, set to work on his own account, and, having forced an opening into the vault beneath the professor's laboratory, he saw sufficient to justify him in making a further disclosure to his employers. From thence onwards events moved rapidly, and friends and admirers of the suspect had the extremely painful experience of working in secret to hang their colleague.

On the night of his arrest Dr. Webster was entertaining a few neighbours in his comfortable residence at Cambridge, when a cab drew up before the door. A moment later Mr. Clapp, a police official, knocked, and was admitted by the professor. The caller had a warrant for his arrest, but, shrinking from inflicting pain on the family by effecting a humiliating capture, he informed him that it had been decided to make a search at the Medical College in Grove Street, and that he would be obliged if the professor would accompany him there and superintend the operations.

It is very probable that Webster, who must have been tortured day and night by anticipations of such a scene, guessed immediately that he was in the grip of the law, but, whatever his feelings, his hand was steady as he lighted a cigar and stepped into the cab. For some minutes he chatted with Clapp, as if unconscious of the presence of the other policemen, and it was not until he noticed that they were not going in the direction of Grove Street that he exhibited signs of nervousness.

"Why, this is not the Medical College!" he exclaimed, as the cab stopped outside a gloomy building.

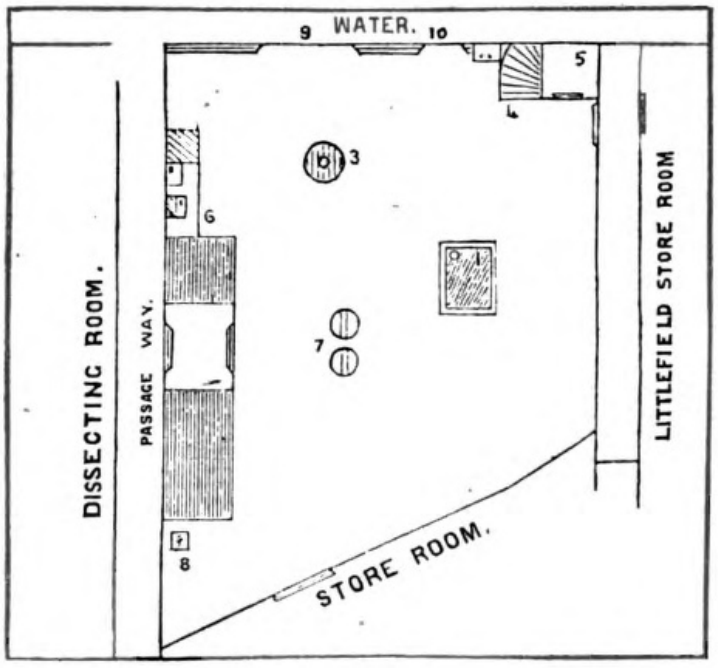
"No, sir, it is not," answered Clapp, laying a hand on his arm as he stepped out. "It is my painful duty to inform you, Dr. Webster, that you are accused of the murder of Dr. Parkman."

The prisoner's terror paralyzed him, and he had to be carried to a cell and attended by a doctor before he could utter a word. But guilt could be read in his expression and despair in his demeanour, for the expert chemist and anatomist knew that he had failed to destroy all evidences of his terrible crime.

Gradually it was conveyed to him that part of the remains of Dr. Parkman had been discovered in the furnace of his laboratory, in the vault underneath it, and in a tea-chest at the Medical College. A half-hearted attempt was made to divert suspicion towards Ephraim Littlefield; that was succeeded by the creation of a rumour that the bones, etc., really belonged to one of the subjects of the college and had been smuggled into Professor Webster's rooms by some mischievous students.

Nearly five months elapsed before he was brought to trial, and his skilful legal advisers took full advantage of the delay. Their chief hope was based on the difficulties of the prosecution in establishing the identity of the remains, for it was common knowledge that a shrewd Boston jury, composed of hard-headed men with a passion for facts and with strong religious feelings, would not consign to a shameful death a gentleman of hitherto unblemished character because a few bones and some human flesh had been found in his rooms in a building devoted to medical research. Furthermore, the defence had succeeded in finding five respectable persons who

PROFESSOR WEBSTER'S LABORATORY.



Explanation of the Diagram.

1. A wet sink, connecting with the vault by a small pipe.
2. Sink, with Cochituate water
3. Stove.
4. Staircase leading from the Laboratory to the Professor's private room, and encircling the [illegible]
5. [illegible] immedietely under which the pelvis, right thigh, and lower part of the left leg were found.
6. Furnace, in which were found the mineral teeth, and some small particles of the shin bone.
7. Two large casks, used for chemical purposes.
8. Tea chest, in which the thorax and left thigh were discovered.
9. A very large window, overlooking the water, and about two feet above it at high tide.
10. Another large window, but not so wide as 9; also overlooking the water. Both windows without blinds or curtains.

From a Boston paper at the time of the trial.

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were prepared to swear that they had seen Dr. George Parkman some hours after the time fixed by the prosecution as coinciding with his murder by Professor Webster. Finally, they decided in the interests of their client that, should the Court seem inclined to accept the identification of the remains as those of the missing doctor, they would advance on their client's behalf that at the worst it was only a case of manslaughter, a sudden quarrel over money matters ending in a fight between the two men, which resulted in the death of the aggressor, Dr. Parkman.



"IT IS MY PAINFUL DUTY TO INFORM YOU THAT YOU ARE ACCUSED OF THE MURDER OF DR. PARKMAN."

The trial lasted twelve days and was a very remarkable affair. Lemuel Shaw, a dignified Chief Justice, had three associate judges, and the Attorney-General, John H. Clifford, and George Bemis prosecuted, the accused being defended by Pliny Merrick and Edward Sohier. The most important evidence was given by the medical experts summoned by the Government, that of Dr. Keep, a well-known dentist of the time, being mainly responsible for the verdict of the jury.

When Dr. Webster had slain his creditor and had dismembered him and had used the furnace to help him to destroy the body, he had not paid any special attention to the teeth of his victim. But a year previously Dr. Parkman had had a set of false teeth inserted, and his dentist had not had an easy task, for the doctor's mouth was very peculiarly shaped. When the remains were found in the laboratory, amongst them were some false teeth and part of the lower jaw. Now Dr. Keep, the dentist, had kept the cast he had made of Parkman's mouth, and at the trial he demonstrated that those parts of the mouth recovered fitted it perfectly, and also the false teeth. He was corroborated by his assistant, and cross-examination did not shake his evidence.

Over a hundred witnesses were called, and four long speeches were delivered by the counsel engaged. Dr. Jared Sparks—who had been introduced to Charles Dickens with the prisoner a few years previously, and who was now President of Harvard—generously testified to the good character Webster had borne in the community and in the college. Other men of eminence gave similar testimony, and, as already mentioned, citizens of unimpeachable respectability swore that they had seen Dr. Parkman alive long after he was supposed to have been murdered by the Ewing Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy. The prosecution asked permission to introduce rebutting evidence by proving that on the day of Dr. Parkman's murder a man had come to Boston who was very much like the doctor physically. However, the judges would not allow the Attorney-General to create a precedent, and it was left to the jurors to decide that the witnesses had been mistaken.

Had it not been for the testimony of Dr. Keep the jury might have acquitted the prisoner. The twelve "good men and true" took their task with becoming seriousness, and each evening they held a prayer meeting, and when they retired to consider their verdict they prayed fervently before proceeding to vote on the issues of the trial. A member of the jury afterwards wrote to the *Boston Traveller* describing what had happened in the jury-room.

"The foreman called upon a juror to offer prayer," he said, "and this was done, most feelingly and sincerely. We then

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proceeded to the most trying and painful part of our arduous duty. The various articles which were put into the case were examined by the jury, and particularly those things which seemed to bear most strongly against the prisoner. The final decision of the question was resolved into three parts :—

"First. Are the remains of a human body, found in the Medical College on the 30th November, 1849, those of the late Dr. George Parkman ?

"Second. Did Dr. George Parkman come to his death by the hands of Dr. John W. Webster, on the 23rd November, 1849 ?

"Third. Is Dr. John W. Webster guilty, as set forth in the indictment, of the wilful murder of Dr. George Parkman ?



"EVERY MAN WAS LOOKING HORROR-STRICKEN AT HIS NEIGHBOUR."

"When the vote on the first question was put twelve hands arose immediately. Some little discussion then took place, when the second question was tested, and twelve hands at once arose. The third—the most important question of all—was next to be tried. A pause ensued. One juror—in his sympathies of kindness for the prisoner (who was his personal acquaintance or friend) and his afflicted family—shrank from the 'fiery ordeal.' 'Can't we stop here ? Can't the law be vindicated and justice satisfied if we pause here ? Must we take the *life* of the unhappy prisoner ?' Some discussion ensued ; the mind of the juror seemed more calm, and he expressed his readiness to vote on the *final* question, which was then put, and twelve hands arose. The die was cast, and Dr. John W. Webster was pronounced guilty of murder."

Sentence of death by hanging was passed by Chief Justice Shaw, and the prisoner was removed. Then followed the usual attempts to secure a new trial, and when they failed an effort was made to induce the Governor to pardon the unhappy convict. All the influence of the family, together with the assistance of benevolent friends, was exerted, but without avail, and after a long delay the night came when Webster was informed that the next morning he would be executed. By that time he had become reconciled to his fate, and before he went to his death he confessed his crime. A few hours later two relatives called to see him. They were informed that he was dead and that the body was at the disposal of his family, for the date of the execution had been kept a secret, and all that remained to be done was to bury the corpse as quickly and as secretly as possible.

Dickens, in a letter to Lord Lytton, gave a description of the scene of Webster's crime. "Being in Cambridge," he wrote in 1867, 'I thought I would go over the Medical School and see the exact localities where Professor Webster did that amazing murder and worked so hard to rid himself of the body of the murdered man. (I find there is, of course, no rational doubt that the professor was always a secretly cruel man.) They were horribly grim, private, cold, and quiet ; the identical furnace smelling fearfully (some anatomical broth in it, I suppose), as if the body were still there ; jars of pieces of sour mortality standing about, like the forty robbers in 'Ali Baba' after being scalded to death ; and bodies near us ready to be carried into next morning's lectures. At the house where I afterwards dined I heard an amazing and fearful story ; told by one who had been at a dinner-party of ten or a dozen, at Webster's, less than a year before the murder. They began rather uncomfortably, in consequence of one of the guests (the victim of an instinctive antipathy) starting up with the sweat pouring down his face, and crying out, 'O Heaven ! There's a cat somewhere in the room !' The cat was found and ejected, but they didn't get on very well. Left with their wine, they were getting on a little better when Webster suddenly told the servants to turn the gas off and bring in that bowl of burning minerals which he had prepared in order that the company might see how they looked by its weird light. All this was done, and every man was looking horror-stricken at his neighbour, when Webster was seen bending over the bowl with a rope round his neck, holding up the end of the rope, with his head on one side and his tongue lolled out, to represent a hanged man.'"

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FROM *the* DEPTHS

By F. Britten Austin.

Illustrated by C. M. PADDAY, R.O.I.

THE s.s. *Upsal*, two thousand tons, the Swedish ensign at her taffrail, her one black-spouting funnel still daubed with remains of wartime camouflage, lifted and plunged doggedly into the teeth of the September south-west gale. But her look-out no longer scrutinized every flitting patch of foam in apprehension of the dreaded periscope. The violences of sea and sky were dangers as of yore. From the depths came now no menace.

The group upon her bridge was more numerous than is customary on a cheaply-run little freighter of her class. In addition to the second officer, whose watch it was, and the look-out man on the opposite corner of the bridge, were three others. Two of them, young men oilskin-clad like their companions, stood close together in an attitude which indicated a personal acquaintanceship independent of the working of the vessel. The third man held himself aloof.

The buoyant twist and roll which accompanied the lift and plunge of the *Upsal*, the frequent racing of her propeller, indicated that she was running in ballast. Almost for the first time in her drab, maid-of-all-work career, indeed, the *Upsal* carried no cargo. She was on a special mission. A Scandinavian salvage syndicate, having come to an arrangement with the underwriters of a few out of the hundreds of vessels which strew the bottom of the entrances to the British seas, had chartered her to locate and survey a group of promising wrecks, preparatory to more extended operations. The two young men were their technical engineers: Jensen, the taller of the pair, and Lyngstrand, his assistant.

The third man, who stood aloof from them, was Captain Horst, the master of the ship. He was, of course, primarily responsible to his owners, and not to the syndicate who had chartered his vessel. Until they reached the location of the wrecks the submarine engineers were merely passengers. Reticent and sombre as he had been since the commencement of the voyage, he ignored them now, stood apparently lost in abstract contemplation of the grey waste of sea. But one who could have looked into his face would have been impressed and puzzled by his expression. His glance looked down, apparently fascinated, upon the seas which raced below him as the *Upsal* lifted on yet another crest, as though there were something strange in being so high above them—and then jerked up, automatically, to the horizon as in swift, instinctive doubt of impunity. A psychologist would have suspected that he allowed a fear of some kind, so long-abiding as to have become a subconscious mental habit, the relief of free play when he knew himself unwatched.

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When at last there was no object to claim the eye on all the tumultuous stretch of ocean ahead, Jensen turned to his companion and pointed downwards. Lyngstrand nodded assent, and they both staggered across the wet, reeling bridge towards the ladder which led below.

The skipper, staring aft, his back to them, blocked their passage. Jensen touched him on the shoulder. He swung round abruptly with a startled curse. Then, recognizing them, he moved aside grudgingly. His face was turned from them as they passed.

The two young men descended to the deck below. They were berthed in the saloon under the poop, but they took their meals in the chart-house immediately beneath the bridge, in company with the skipper, who slept there. In addition to mealtimes, the chart-house was a convenient refuge from the weather common to all of them. It was their objective now.

"Filthy weather!" said Jensen, producing pipe and tobacco-pouch. "But we ought to get there to-night. We're changing course now to the north-west. Feel it?"

Jensen, having lit his pipe, produced a type-written sheet of paper from his pocket. It was a list of ships, followed by indications of latitude, longitude, and other particulars.

"No. 1—*Gloucester City*, seven thousand five hundred tons, latitude fifty degrees fifty-five minutes north, longitude nine degrees fourteen minutes west, sixty fathoms, torpedoed September 20th, 1918," he read out. "Get the chart, Lyngstrand, and let us prick down its exact position."

His fair-haired junior obediently spread out a chart of the exit to the English Channel upon the table.

"September 20th!" he said, reflectively. "That's curious, Jensen! Exactly a year ago to-day!"

'Coincidences must happen sometimes," replied Jensen, with the superior indifference of three or four years' seniority. "I see nothing remarkable in it."

"It just struck me," said Lyngstrand, apologetically. "No—I suppose there's nothing remarkable in it—it might just as well have been any other day."

Jensen threw a cursory glance at the chart.

"You've brought the wrong one," he said, snappily. "This doesn't go far enough north. Look in the drawer there—there must be another one."

"It is up in the wheelhouse, I think, Jensen," demurred the young man, mildly.

"Yes—I know—but old Horst is certain to have a duplicate. Look in the drawer and see!" replied Jensen, with an impatience invited by the docility of his junior.

Lyngstrand obeyed, rummaging among a number of charts in the drawer of the locker under Captain Horst's bunk.

"Here we are!" he cried at last, unrolling one of them. "This is a special one, evidently! Someone has marked it all over with red ink."

Jensen snatched it from him, spread it out. In fact, as Lyngstrand said, it was marked in many places with little red-ink crosses, and under each was a date. Jensen ran his finger across it, stopped just off the south coast of Ireland.

"By all that's wonderful!" he cried, in a slow, long-drawn accent of amazement, raising his head and looking at his companion. "*He has marked our wreck!* Look! —Fifty-fifty-five north, nine-fourteen west—and there's the date under it—20-9-18!"

"Then all those other crosses——?" queried Lyngstrand, in a voice of puzzled interest.

"They must be—— Wait a minute!" He compared some of them with the indications on his list. "Yes! They are wrecks, too—all torpedoed ships—look! this and this and this are marked on the chart! There are others not marked—but there are many more marks than there are ships on our list. They must be all torpedoed ships!"

"But why?" asked Lyngstrand. "Why has he got them all marked like this? Where did he get this chart, I wonder?"

Jensen glanced to the bottom of the sheet.

"*This is a German chart!*" he exclaimed.

Lyngstrand stared at him.

"German——!" he began, and stopped. They looked into each other's eyes in a long moment when suspicion defined itself as almost certitude. For that moment they forgot the sickly rolling of the ship thrashing and wallowing on her way to one of those tragic little red crosses. They forgot everything except the slowly-dawning possible corollaries of this discovery.

Before either could utter another word, the lee door of the chart-house opened and Captain Horst stood framed in the entrance. He glared across at them, his face livid with a sudden anger, his eyes blazing. Then, with a scarcely articulate but vehemently muttered oath, he sprang across the little room, snatched the chart from the table, thrust it into the drawer, locked it up, and put the key in his pocket. He uttered an exclamation of angry contempt and, without further speech, walked out of the chart-house.

The two young men looked at each other.

"That is the second time this morning!" said Jensen, at last, glancing towards the door, now once more closed on them.

"What is?" asked Lyngstrand, curiously.

"*That he has cursed in German!* Lyngstrand! I am beginning to see into this!"

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"But it's impossible!" exclaimed Lyngstrand, his mind leaping to his friend's deduction and then rejecting it. "He is a Swede, like ourselves!"

"He is a German!" said Jensen, positively.

"But he speaks Swedish without a trace of accent!"

"And other languages also, I expect—French and English as well—better than you or I speak them, I have no doubt. Swedish would much facilitate service in the Baltic—and your German naval officer was linguistically well equipped for any possible campaign."

"German naval officer!" echoed Lyngstrand, incredulously.

"I will bet on it!" asserted his friend.

"But—a German naval officer commanding a rotten little tramp like the *Upsal?*" said Lyngstrand, emphasizing his incredulity. "I can't believe it!"

"Even German ex-naval officers have to live, my friend," responded Jensen, axiomatically. "And—I ask you—what is open to them but to take service in the mercantile marine of other nations? There is no more German fleet—there are not enough merchant vessels left under the German flag to employ all their trained officers. On the other hand, all the Scandinavian nations have multiplied their trading fleets—they cannot find officers enough for them. A first-class seaman like Horst, speaking Swedish like a native, would find plenty of owners only too willing to employ him."

"It sounds plausible," agreed Lyngstrand, but somewhat doubtfully.

"Plausible!" repeated Jensen, scornfully. "It is more than plausible—the more I think of it, the more certain I am. He is a German naval officer, I will swear to it! More than that, I am convinced that he commanded a submarine!"

"That chart, then?"

"Is the chart of his sinkings!"

"By God!" said Lyngstrand, solemnly, setting his teeth and staring sternly at the chart-house wall. "If I were sure of it——"

"What do you mean?" asked Jensen, struck by this sudden change from his friend's



"'THIS IS A GERMAN CHART!' JENSEN EXCLAIMED."

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ordinarily meek demeanour. "What has it to do with you?"

Lyngstrand turned to him with a bitter little laugh. He seemed, indeed, a different man.

"More than you think, my friend," he said, briefly. "I am not good company for U-boat commanders!"

"But why? You lost no one?"

Lyngstrand's serious eyes held his.

"You remember I went to America in 1917, Jensen? I met a girl there—we were betrothed. She was coming to Europe to me last year. She never arrived. Her ship—a neutral—a small Norwegian ship, the *Trondhjem*, on which I had arranged for her passage—was torpedoed in the Atlantic last September—*spurlos versenkt!*" He finished in a tone of bitter mimicry, and then suddenly hid his face in his hands through a silence which Jensen felt incapable of breaking. At last he looked up again. "If ever I trace the scoundrel who murdered her——" The ugly menace in his voice supplied the final clause to his unfinished sentence.

"A difficult task!" murmured Jensen, sympathetically.

Lyngstrand glanced at the closed drawer of the locker.

"When I think that perhaps on that chart—one of those little red crosses——" He crashed his hand upon the table. "By God, Jensen, I would give something to have another look at it!"

Jensen laid a friendly hand on his shoulder.

"We will do our best, Lyngstrand, to see it again. But don't torture yourself about it now. Come out on deck. The barometer is rising, and if the sea goes down to-morrow we shall want to keep clear heads for our investigation of the *Gloucester City*. Come!"

He rose and held out his friend's oilskins, helped him on with them.

They went out and stood in the shelter of the lee-deck, watching the foam-froth sink down and melt in the depths of the malachite waves that rolled away from them, until soon after eight bells the white-jacketed steward clanged out his announcement of dinner.

"I think the weather is moderating, Captain Horst," Jensen said, pleasantly, as he sat down.

"*Ja*," responded Captain Horst, gruffly, throwing a perfunctory glance through the unshuttered forward windows of the chart-house.

"We ought to reach the neighbourhood of our wreck some time to-night?" pursued Jensen, in affable inquiry.

Lyngstrand had addressed himself in silence to the food the steward set before him, but he glanced up as though some undertone of significance in his friend's voice had caught his ear.

"Thereabouts," conceded Captain Horst, in a tone which sufficiently indicated that he was disinclined for conversation.

But Jensen was cheerfully loquacious.

"I wonder whether we shall hit on some other wreck instead?" he surmised. "These seas must be strewn with them."

Captain Horst shrugged his shoulders.

Lyngstrand looked up.

"If I were a German U-boat commander," he said, with a quiet deliberation, his eyes straight on Captain Horst's face, "I should not dare to sail over these seas again. I should see drowning faces sinking through every wave."

His last sentence seemed to ring through the silence which followed it. Captain Horst sat impassive, but his brutal jaw locked hard and his cruel mouth thinned during the moment in which he returned Lyngstrand's glance.

"Bah!" he said. "The dead don't come back!" There was something of defiance in his harshly contemptuous tone. "They are finished with—for ever!"

The blood went out of Lyngstrand's face as he bent down again to his plate.

There was no further conversation during the meal.

When, a little after four bells, they were summoned to tea, the sun was setting in a golden splendour that promised a peaceful dawn. The gale had obviously blown itself out.

Excited by the prospect of the next day's work, the two young men forgot their suspicions of Captain Horst, could talk of nothing but their plans for diving despite the after-swell of the gale which would surely still be running. The captain listened to their impatience with the ghost of a grim smile, but volunteered no part in the conversation.

"Do you propose to keep under way all night, Captain Horst?" inquired Jensen.

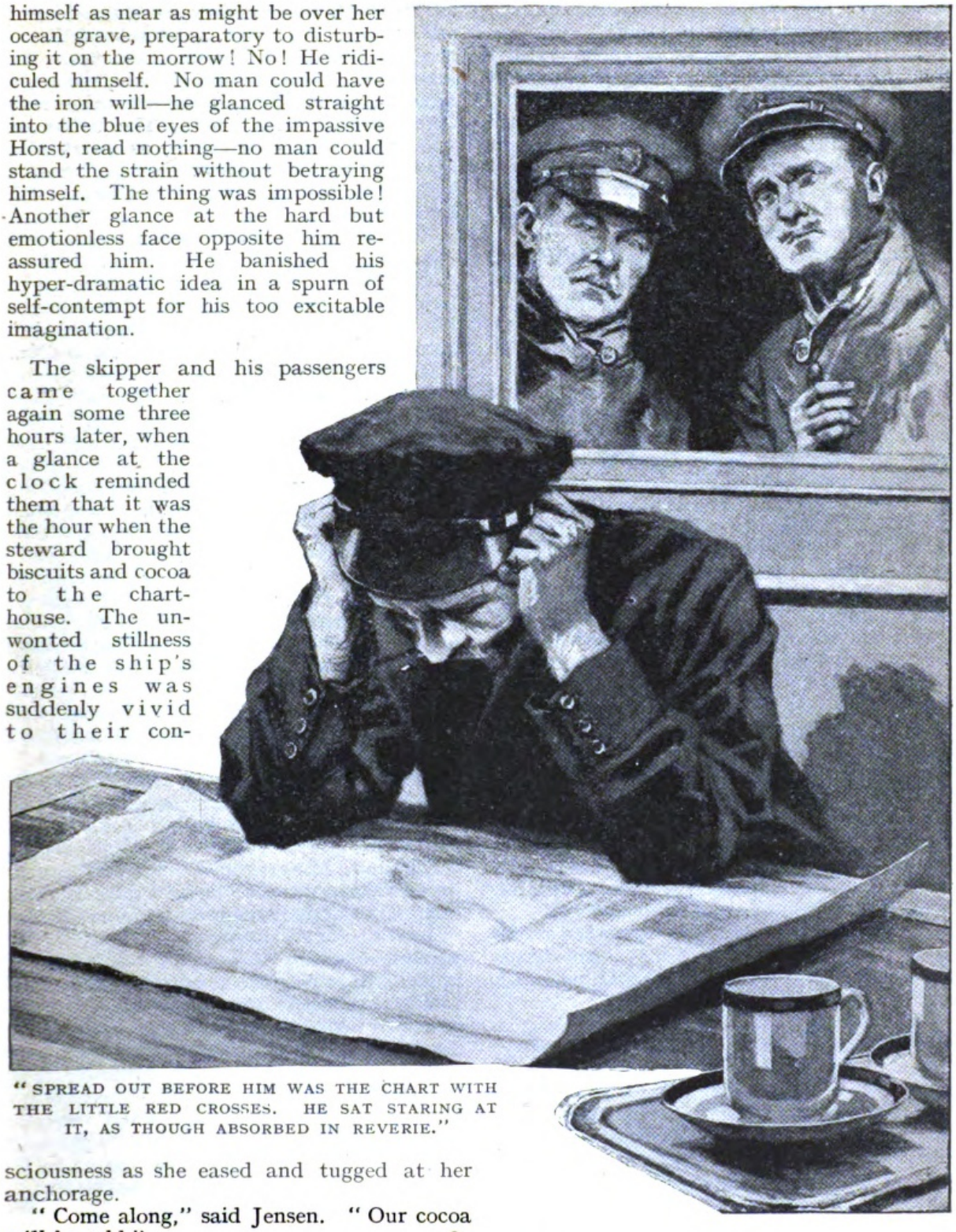
"No," he replied. "By my dead reckoning we ought to be in the vicinity of the wreck at about eight bells to-night. I shall anchor then if the glass is still rising. To-morrow we will take an observation and get as close as we can to the position of the *Gloucester City*—presuming that you have it correctly stated."

His tone was perfectly indifferent, but Lyngstrand thought suddenly of that chart with the little red crosses—and particularly that cross on their indicated spot, fifty degrees fifty-five minutes north, nine degrees fourteen minutes west, with the fatal date of exactly a year ago—20-9-18. Surely it could not be mere coincidence! He thrilled suddenly with a dramatic perception. If—if it were so—if the man so calmly smiling at him had really sent the *Gloucester City* to the bottom!—and now, on the anniversary of the crime, was coolly proposing to anchor

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himself as near as might be over her ocean grave, preparatory to disturbing it on the morrow! No! He ridiculed himself. No man could have the iron will—he glanced straight into the blue eyes of the impassive Horst, read nothing—no man could stand the strain without betraying himself. The thing was impossible! Another glance at the hard but emotionless face opposite him reassured him. He banished his hyper-dramatic idea in a spurn of self-contempt for his too excitable imagination.

The skipper and his passengers came together again some three hours later, when a glance at the clock reminded them that it was the hour when the steward brought biscuits and cocoa to the chart-house. The unwonted stillness of the ship's engines was suddenly vivid to their consciousness as she eased and tugged at her anchorage.



"SPREAD OUT BEFORE HIM WAS THE CHART WITH THE LITTLE RED CROSSES. HE SAT STARING AT IT, AS THOUGH ABSORBED IN REVERIE."

"Come along," said Jensen. "Our cocoa will be cold."

At the chart-house door they hesitated for a moment on an indefinable impulse, peeped through the unshuttered window which allowed a broad ray of light to fall across the deck.

Captain Horst was seated at the table, his head in his hands, his back to them. Spread out before him was the chart with the little red crosses. He sat motionless, staring at it, as though absorbed in reverie. The three cups of cocoa were steaming on the table. His was untouched.

For one wild moment Lyngstrand thought he might be able to surprise a glance at the chart. He turned the handle of the door as stealthily as he could. Slight as the sound had been, however, Captain Horst had heard it. When they entered he was stuffing

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something into his breast pocket, and the chart was no longer on the table.

They drank their cocoa in silence, Horst staring moodily at the floor, Jensen and Lyngstrand risking a glance of mutual comprehension. Suddenly two loud, sharp knocks broke the stillness—knocks that seemed to be on the chart house wall.

Captain Horst raised his head.

"*Herein!*" he cried, automatically, obviously without thinking.

Jensen shot a swift look at his friend, eyebrows raised at this German permission of entry. Horst bit his lip, suddenly self-conscious. He repeated the authorization in Swedish.

No one entered.

Expectation was just passing into a vague surprise, when the knocks were repeated—three heavy blows, obviously deliberate, upon the after-wall of the chart-house.

Horst sprang up, with a savage curse of exasperation. He was self-controlled enough, however, to utter his thought in Swedish. "I'll teach them!" he exclaimed, as he flung open the chart-house door. "Fooling around here!"

He disappeared into the night, and they heard the tramp of his heavy sea-boots as he ran round the chart-house. But no other sound woke upon his passage. The circuit completed, they heard his angry yell to the look-out man on the bridge above, heard the quietly normal response, the surprised denial. The interior of the chart-house was a hushed stillness where Jensen and Lyngstrand sat exchanging a smile of malicious enjoyment. Horst vituperated the stammering look-out man in a flood of ugly oaths that were plainly a break-down of nervous control.

The door opened again for his entry.

"Extraordinary thing!" he scowled across at them. "No one there! You heard them, didn't you?" He seated himself with an angry grunt.

Before they could answer, the knocks recommenced in a sudden vehemence—not slow and deliberate this time, but in a rapid succession which quickened to a fast and furious fusillade from origins that seemed to play, flitting arbitrarily, all over the walls and roof. The chart-house reverberated with them. Their intensity varied at every moment from sharp, hammer-like blows to rapid, nervous taps from what might have been a feverishly agitated pencil. The wild and uncanny tattoo culminated in three crashing blows that seemed to be on the underside of the table itself. There was silence.

"What are you playing at?" cried Horst, glaring at them in fierce suspicion of a hoax.

For answer, they both lifted up their hands, obviously unoccupied, into the air. Even as they did so, the knocks started again, still rapid, but with a certain deliberate rhythm, and much less violent. Again they seemed to be on the underside of the table. Horst looked, with a scowl of distrust, under it to their immobile feet. The two young men glanced at each other, as puzzled and alarmed as Horst himself.

"What in the name of Heaven is it?" cried Jensen.

The knocks swelled suddenly louder as though in answer to his voice.

"Listen!" said Horst, holding up his hand. The colour had gone suddenly out of his face, his eyes fixed themselves in a recognition charged with vague fear. "It's——!"

"Yes!" cried Jensen, "by all that's wonderful——!"

"The Morse code!" Lyngstrand completed the sentence.

Once perceived, there was no doubt of it.

"But," cried Lyngstrand, "where does it come from? We have no wireless—and even wireless could not produce that!"

"Listen!" Jensen reproved him. "It's a message of some kind!" He glanced across to Horst, who sat speechless, his face grey, his eyes terrified. "Not Swedish! Take it down, Lyngstrand, while I spell it out!"

The young man feverishly produced pencil and paper from his pocket. "Listen!" he cried. "Good God! Do you catch it?"

Three sharp taps—three more widely spaced—three sharp taps again—the series was reiterated insistently—S-O-S!—S-O-S!—S-O-S!

"Ready, Lyngstrand?" queried Jensen, in the sharp tone of a man concentrating himself for action. His comrade nodded.

Jensen rapped sharply upon the table the wireless operator's signal of reception. In immediate answer the raps from the invisible source renewed themselves, continued evidently in a message. Lyngstrand jotted down the letters as Jensen spelled them out.

"'*s-t-e-a-m-s-h-i-p*'—it's English!" he interjected. "Got it?——" The raps had continued, noted by his brain and coalesced by it into definite words. "'*gloucester city*'——"

"*What*——?" ejaculated Lyngstrand, in incredulous amazement, as he rapidly wrote the words.

Jensen continued, his attention fixed upon the unceasing raps.

"——*torpedoed fifty-fifty-five north nine-fourteen west—sinking fast—come quickly—done in*——"

He glanced up to see Horst springing at them like a maddened animal.

"Stop that!" cried the captain. "It's a trick!—it's a trick!" In another second

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he had snatched paper and pencil from Lyngstrand's hand.

A formidable series of violent crashes, emanating from walls, roof, and table, was the instant response to his action. He shrank back, appalled, crouching with eyes that searched the surrounding walls in agonized apprehension. "It's a trick!—it's a diabolical trick!" he muttered. "*It must be!*"

"Captain Horst!" said Jensen, with sternly level authority. "Be good enough to sit down and remain quiet. All matters relating to the *Gloucester City* come within my province."

Horst, his arms up as though to guard himself, went slowly backwards to his seat, but did not sit. There was madness in his eyes. "How could they know?"—he said to himself, in a sharp-breathed whisper; "*the exact words!*——"

"What do you mean?" queried Lyngstrand, curiously.

Horst replied without thinking, more to himself than to his questioner.

"The exact words of her call for help—a year ago! My wireless picked it up after we had left her——" He stopped suddenly, realized that he had betrayed himself.

"Then——!" cried Lyngstrand, jumping up from his seat and taking a step forward. His eyes, full of menace, searched the ex-U-boat commander's face.

"Be quiet—both of you!" commanded Jensen, holding up his hand. The regular succession of raps had commenced again. Jensen listened to them, nodded. Then he himself rapped a message in English on the table: "*who are you?*"

Horst and Lyngstrand listened in dead silence as the answer spelled itself out upon the table:—

"*h-e-n-r-y s-m-i-t-h w-i-r-e-l-e-s-s o-p-e-r-a-t-o-r g-l-o-u-c-e-s-t-e-r c-i-t-y.*"

Jensen turned a glance of wonderment to his comrade. Horst, reading the message as currently as the others, looked as though about to faint.

"Stop it!" he said, hoarsely. "Stop it!"

Jensen ignored him, rapped again upon the table: "*where are you now?*"

The answer came immediately:—

"*a-t y-o-u-r s-i-d-e.*"

The three of them sprang back simultaneously, as from the presence of a ghost. Their eyes probed empty air.

Jensen spoke aloud, still in English.

"Can you see us—hear us?"

The raps of the invisible hand upon the table replied at once: "*y-e-s.*"

"*Mein Gott!*" muttered Horst. "I shall go mad!"

Jensen continued his colloquy.

"Where is the *Gloucester City?*" He smiled to himself as though setting a trap for this unseen intelligence. "Is she still afloat?"

The raps recommenced without hesitation.

"*y-o-u-r a-n-c-h-o-r f-i-x-e-d i-n u-p-p-e-r w-o-r-k-s.*"

Lyngstrand uttered an ejaculation of awed astonishment. He looked to see the sweat pearling on Captain Horst's forehead.

The raps spelled out, spontaneously, an explanatory afterword:—

"*w-e l-e-d y-o-u t-o i-t.*"

"*We?*" queried Jensen. "Who are '*we*'?"

"*t-h-e d-r-o-w-n-e-d.*" The raps were decisive.

"Why?" Lyngstrand admired his comrade's steely self-control. "Why did you lead us to it?"

"*h-e c-a-n g-u-e-s-s.*"

"Who?"

"*t-h-e m-u-r-d-e-r-e-r.*"

Both glanced swiftly at Horst. He was speechless, his face a study in blanched terror.

"*h-e k-n-o-w-s,*" added the raps. There was something indefinably malicious about their sound.

"Stop it!" Horst's voice was strangled, scarcely audible. "Stop it!"

Jensen was unmoved.

"How many of you?" he asked.

Lyngstrand, fascinated by this conversation with the unseen, was grateful for the question.

"*t-h-r-e-e h-u-n-d-r-e-d a-n-d e-i-g-h-t g-l-o-u-c-e-s-t-e-r c-i-t-y h-u-n-d-r-e-d a-n-d f-i-v-e r-e-s-c-u-e-d o-t-h-e-r s-h-i-p-s f-o-u-r h-u-n-d-r-e-d a-n-d t-h-i-r-t-e-e-n i-n a-l-l.*"

"All men?" queried Jensen.

"*t-w-e-n-t-y-f-i-v-e w-o-m-e-n.*"

"My God!" muttered Lyngstrand, in a sudden vivid remembrance that stabbed him like a pain. He glanced at Horst.

Jensen glanced also, and was merciless.

"Are you all here?" he asked.

"*y-e-s.*" There was a little pause. "*h-u-n-d-r-e-d-s m-o-r-e I d-o-n-t k-n-o-w d-r-o-w-n-e-d o-t-h-e-r s-u-n-k s-h-i-p-s a-l-l h-e-r-e.*"

Lyngstrand shivered, looked around him uneasily. Jensen's voice scarcely betrayed a tremor as he pursued:—

"What have you come for?"

"*w-e h-a-v-e c-o-m-e f-o-r h-i-m.*"

"No! No!" screamed Horst, suddenly. "No! *Ach, Gott, schütze mich!*"

Both Lyngstrand and Jensen had a sense of inaudible mocking laughter in the air about them. There was an awful silence.

The raps recommenced spontaneously.

"*t-e-l-l h-i-m t-h-e-y a-r-e f-i-l-l-i-n-g p-a-s-t h-i-m i-d-e-n-t-i-f-y-i-n-g h-i-m.*"

Jensen turned to Horst.

"You hear?" he asked, grimly.

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But Horst, with a blood-curdling scream of terror, had flung himself at the chart-house door, thrown it open. They heard the hiss and sough of the dark seas. He plunged out, blindly, head foremost. Then, just beyond the threshold, he stopped, recoiled, staggered back into the chart-house.

"No!" he gasped, hoarsely. "No! *I can't face them! I can't face them!* I dare not jump! I daren't!"

He shook in a palsy of the faculties. His eyes agonizedly sought their unsympathetic faces. The German submarine commander is a pariah among seafaring men, whatever their nationality. He realized it, hopelessly, as he met their hard eyes. With a sob of self-pity, he stumbled across to a corner of the chart-house, sank down upon the seat, covered his face with his hands.

Lyngstrand's young features were sternly set as he glanced at him. Then he took a long breath, the preparatory oxygen-renewal of the man who dares an experiment that will tax him. He rapped the wireless "call-up" upon the table.

"Can the others communicate also?" he asked, loudly, in English. He also was trembling.

The answer came at once.

"*o-n-l-y t-h-r-o-u-g-h m-e.*" There was a slight pause, then the raps recommenced again: "*l-a-d-y h-e-r-e h-a-s a m-e-s-s-a-g-e f-o-r p-e-t-e-r*"—the raps hesitated—"*p-e-t-e-r f-u-n-n-y n-a-m-e c-a-n-t c-a-t-c-h i-t.*"

Lyngstrand's face went deathly white.

"Yes," he gasped, only just able to speak, "Peter—yes—go on!" He looked at the table as though expecting to see the hand that was rapping out the message. Tap-tap-tap, it came.

"*p-e-t-e-r l-i-n-g-s-t-r-a-n-d.*"

"Yes—here!" he gasped. "Go on! Who is it?"

"*m-a-r-y t-i-l-l-o-t-s-o-n.*"

He reeled against the table, clutched at it.

"My God!" he murmured to himself, his eyes closing, his teeth grinding upon one another in an agony of emotion. Then, with a supreme effort of self-control, he asked, loudly: "The message? Give it me!"

"*s-h-e s-a-y-s s-h-e s-u-r-e l-o-v-e-s y-o-u s-t-i-l-l a-n-d i-s w-a-i-t-i-n-g f-o-r y-o-u.*"

"Mary!" The cry burst from him, sobbingly, on a note of poignant anguish. Jensen felt the tears start to his eyes. Horst cowered still, face hidden, in his corner.

There was a long moment in which Lyngstrand failed to bring another sound to utterance. He swayed as though about to faint. Then once more he mastered himself.

"What—what happened?" he asked, unsteadily. "How did she die? Was she torpedoed?"

"*s-h-e s-a-y-s s-t-e-a-m-e-r t-r-o-n-d-h-j-e-m s-u-n-k g-u-n-f-i-r-e r-e-s-c-u-e-d s-m-a-l-l b-o-a-t b-y g-l-o-u-c-e-s-t-e-r c-i-t-y a-f-t-e-r-w-a-r-d-s t-o-r-p-e-d-o-e-d.*"

Lyngstrand reeled with closed eyes. He had a vivid vision of the torn wreck in the depths beneath them, carnivorous fish darting where their anchor grappled its untenanted bridge.

"Did—did they have a chance?" he asked.

"*n-i-g-h-t w-i-t-h-o-u-t w-a-r-n-i-n-g,*" came the answer.

Lyngstrand drew another deep breath, glanced at the motionless Horst.

"And—and the man—the man who sank her?"

"*k-a-p-i-t-a-n-l-e-u-t-n-a-n-t h-o-r-s-t.*" There was a terrible precision in those raps.

They ceased. There was a deathly stillness. Through long moments, not one of the three men in the chart-house moved. Then Lyngstrand turned slowly. He took three steps towards Captain Horst, stood over him. The only sounds were the creaking of gear as the *Upsal* rose and subsided on the swell, the swish and suck of the long waves that ran past her in the darkness beyond the open chart-house door.

Lyngstrand's mouth had set in a thin line. His lips, compressed, opened but slightly as he spoke.

"Captain Horst," he said, with grim distinctness, "you are certainly going to die. I give you the privilege of the warning you did not extend to your victims."

Horst looked up suddenly. His eyes, blue still, but crazed with terror, fixed themselves upon the grey eyes that met them pitilessly. His mouth moved under the little red moustache, but no sound came from it.

Lyngstrand continued, an edge of fierce contempt upon his hard voice.

"I even give you a choice. You can, if you like, go out there"—he pointed through the open door to the rayless night—"and throw yourself overboard——"

Horst sprang to his feet, recoiled into the extreme corner of the chart-house.

"No!" he screamed. "No!"

"——or I shall kill you myself," pursued Lyngstrand, evenly.

Horst's face contorted suddenly with demoniac passion. Jensen, who had approached and was watching him closely, saw his hand dart to the pocket of his jacket, and he flung himself forward just as the revolver cracked.

With a red-hot thrust through his shoulder, a sickening faintness in which the floor seemed to rise up to his knees, Jensen tottered back to the chart-house wall. Fighting for consciousness, he dimly saw his comrade hurl himself upon Horst—someone's arm high in the air holding a

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"JENSEN GAZED OUT TO SEE TWO CLOSELY-LOCKED BODIES DISAPPEAR OVER THE BULWARK."

revolver, another arm high with it, clutching at the wrist below the weapon.

Then commenced a terrible silent struggle, the only sounds being the short gasps and sobs of breath of the two men swaying with the motion of the ship. They hugged close, face upon face, in a murderous wrestle where neither dared shift his grip. Both were big-framed, powerful, but Lyngstrand had the advantage of youth. They came, inch by inch, slipping on the floor, past Jensen leaning dizzily against the wall. He saw them through a red mist where the electric lamp glowed vaguely, unmoved like a nebulous star above the tensely locked embrace where life fought for human continuance.

Inch by inch they moved onwards. Jensen, his vision clearing, though impotent to move, saw now that Lyngstrand had the inner berth, that Horst was being gradually, slowly but surely, thrust towards the open door. He saw one of Horst's hands free itself, grip at the door-post, cling to it. He saw the awful terror in the eyes that glared upon his relentless adversary.

Minute after minute the tense and silent struggle at the door continued. Still clutching at the door-post, Horst was gradually borne backward. His feet still in the chart-house, his body, save for that one gripping hand, was bent back out of sight into the darkness.

Suddenly his fingers relaxed their hold. Their feet tripped by the raised threshold of the door, both disappeared headlong in a heavy thud upon the deck outside.

Jensen heard a sharp exclamation, the gasp of bodies that are rolled upon—then the quick scuffling of feet. Agonized for his comrade, he dragged himself painfully towards the door. Just as he reached it one ghastly piercing scream rang through the night.

He gazed out to see two closely-locked bodies disappear over the bulwark.

The dark seas lifted a foaming crest as the *Upsal* rolled.

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"THE WHOLE MIND MUST *GLOW* WITH THOUGHT."

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HOW A BATTLE IS WON

By

MARSHAL FOCH

Marshal Foch was one day asked the question: "What was your keenest emotion during the war?" The great General, with characteristic abruptness, replied: "I felt none whatever!" — and, as his questioner appeared somewhat puzzled, he was good enough to explain his meaning for the benefit of a wider circle.

EMOTIONS are no business of mine—none whatever. In war, emotions are out of place. War is a series of situations, of problems, more or less delicate, more or less involved, which are set before us and which we have to solve.

The first thing to do is to face the problem, to fix it keenly, and to ask: "What is the heart of the matter? What is the thing to be done?"

Of course, no idea of retreat or of bending the line so far as to acknowledge defeat must be admitted for an instant. Anything rather than that. The ground must be held with whatever means are at hand.

But here comes the important point—such means must be used to the best advantage. It is here that intelligence, mental effort, professional skill come into play. The grey matter of the brain must do its part. The whole mind must *glow* with thought.

Consider the Battle of the Marne, on the third day. Certainly our prospects were not shining. In order to stop the gaps which the Boches made in our lines, we had hardly any troops but those who had been under fire and who were utterly exhausted. But what I had clear in mind was this—if the battle had to rage for two, for three days longer, rage it must, for I should never yield.

The same thing happened at the Battle of the Yser. There, also, we had no easy time. There, also, our condition was by no means promising. One had to take, by hook or crook, whatever means were to be found at hand.

A battle, in short, is always won with *remnants*. When night falls, everybody is worn out. The means at your disposal, which seem to you so trivial, so precarious, turn out, after all, to be superior to the enemy's, if only you employ these means with skill and energy.

It may be said, in short, that Victory is the art of using up the scraps.

On the 4th of April, 1918, scarcely a week before I took over the supreme command of the armies of the Allies, I received a visit, at Beauvais, from Mr. Lloyd George, who, it is only just to him to state, did more than any man, from the beginning, to bring about this unity of command. The British Prime Minister asked me point-blank: "Shall I back Ludendorff or you?"

I replied, without hesitation: "You may back me safely. You will be sure to win your bet!"

I saw that Mr. Lloyd George was rather surprised at the confidence with which I spoke. I hastened to explain my reasons. "Ludendorff," I said, "is forced to keep attacking, while, for the time being, I have simply to defend. For the moment I am content to keep him off—but my task is the easier, my chances better, and later on the scene will change. That is why I advise you to bet on me."

Mr. Lloyd George took my counsel. He backed me and he won!

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The Minx and

By Holworthy Hall

PROMPTLY at nine o'clock the door burst open, and Steele rushed in, rampant and dynamic.

He felt the stimulus of the bright November morning. He felt, too, the pulsing energy stored through his brief holiday. His face wore an exultant, boyish grin, due partly to the grandeur of promotion that was so newly his. He swept in as if to take his responsibilities by storm.

When Miss Hastings, who happened to be looking toward the threshold as Steele crossed it, got the full and resplendent effect of that wide grin of his, she straightway went palpitant.

Steele, catching sight of Miss Hastings, halted in mid-career; and an expression of horrified amazement replaced his joyousness. For a searching moment they stared earnestly into each other's countenances, and simultaneously they wilted. To the mind of each leaped the conclusion that the last lingering hope of safety was dead for want of adequate nutrition. And Steele, who was now and then inclined toward the vernacular, expressed this mutual conclusion inwardly when, as he stammered aloud, "Oh! Good morning!" he whispered to his subliminal self, "Good heavens!"

He remembered now that when his chief had told him of the unexpected promotion, and shown him this room that was to be his own, and told him to spend two weeks in recharging his energies at the seaside, he had also said that a secretary would be provided for Steele, who in the past had dictated his occasional letters to a machine.

Without the slightest conceit, Steele knew that he was good-looking, just as he knew his weight was thirteen stone six. He accepted it as casually as he accepted that mysterious quality which made men like him—that attribute which made him supremely successful in his work. But he knew, too, that his physique and his humour and his mannerisms appealed especially to women, who, as a class, had apparently conspired to flirt with and embarrass him. He was abnormally susceptible; he conceded in advance that any girl over sixteen could make a hopeless fool of him.

For years he had loathed himself for this weakness, and he had read many books treating of the power of will and the freedom of individual volition; but, somehow, it did no good. The mere conception, therefore, of being closeted for eight hours a day with any secretary had at first driven him to a reiteration of the platitude that woman's place is in the home.

It would undoubtedly have saved him a good deal of inquietude if he had known that the new secretary was very young, frightened half out of her wits, and not at all convinced that she was going to be a credit to the person who had taught her shorthand. More than that, she was a girl who had chosen her vocation partly because she lacked sufficient training in any other field, and partly because the prospectus of the business school had been drafted by an expert.

Now, from information and belief, Steele was irrevocably persuaded that the average young woman who studies shorthand intends to use the science solely as a means to stop using it as soon as possible. Within a twelvemonth he had noted five vacancies in

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the Brute

Illustrated by W. Dewar



the ranks of the company's typists; he had bought five silver mustard-pots; and he had noted the renunciation by five of his associates of the smoking of cigars, of striking haberdashery, and of expensive luncheons.

And as he stared, in an atrophy of judgment, at Miss Hastings, he was increasingly conscious of the demerits of her own stare, which was alarmingly direct, and calculated, as he knew at once to throw him on the defensive.

If she had only been more conservative she would have been adorable.

"Good morning," said Miss Hastings, stoutly.

Her voice was a trifle louder than usual; there was invincible virtue in it, not unmixed with Christian fortitude. A tidal surge of colour swept over her cheeks. The man was as audacious as she had fancied; yea, more so! He had come in like a whirlwind, and he was ogling her.

Steele cleared his throat viciously—this was the incident that led Miss Hastings to report to her mother that night that he had barked at her.

"I'm Mr. Steele," he said. "I assume that you're——"

"I'm Miss Hastings."

"Oh, yes," he remarked, vaguely. "Well——"

The ellipsis was grim with foreboding. And as Steele proceeded dignifiedly to his seat behind the big desk which a fortnight ago he had viewed with such delight, his secretary was temporarily sustained and soothed by the mere width of the mahogany. Unless he attempted incontinently to climb over it, she had a generous start to the nearest exit in case of emergency.

"Fine morning," said Steele, absently, and bit his lip.

"Very," granted Miss Hastings.

Steele ventured to take a further survey of her, and suffered a further relapse into despondency. She was of a type peculiarly unsuited to the realm of business. She was a small and dainty brunette. Her eyes were large and perilously brown, and shaded by long lashes which she could evidently droop with telling effect at will.

"Br-r-r-ump!" said Steele. "Where have you—er—where have you worked before?"

"This is my—I never had a situation before," said Miss Hastings, truthfully.

"Indeed! Well," he said, "I—er—I'm very critical." This was meant to be a subtle warning. "And this won't be an easy billet—not for a second!"

"Yes?"

"But if you're—careful—and all that sort of thing——" His voice dwindled away to nothingness.

"Take a letter, please," he said, mechanically.

Now, in reality, he had no need of writing letters that morning. The idea had been purely spontaneous and defensive. He wanted her to stop looking at him, and there was nothing else to which he could direct her diligence. And as Miss Hastings snatched for her note-book and pencil, gained them, and composed herself, Steele was perplexingly at a loss for a correspondent.

Miss Hastings was intent and nervous. The note-book rested on her lap; the pencil was poised in readiness; and Miss Hastings's animation was most extraordinary. Steele shivered. He had no way of comprehending that she was teaching him how strictly businesslike she was.

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"Letter to Michael J. Sullivan, Esq., Sullivan Manufacturing Company, 27, Ransom Street, E.C.," said Steele, with abrupt rapidity. "'Dear Mr. Sullivan,—As you probably know comma I have recently been appointed assistant manager of this company comma but I am happy to say that I shall continue to deal with the personal business with which'—er, I mean—'business which I have heretofore conducted full stop. With respect to the quote M 5 quote quantities and prices which I suggested to you last month, I am sorry to say that the figures have advanced two per cent., but'—— What's the matter?"

Miss Hastings, gasping, lifted a face which was at once heroic and pathetic, belligerent and deprecatory.

'I can't—I'm not up with you. You said personal business by which I mean business——' and that's as far as I got."

"Read it to me from the beginning," he commanded, after a hushed interlude.

Miss Hastings caught her breath.

"'Michael J. Sullivan, Esq., Sullivan Manufacturing Company, 27, Ransom Street, E.C. Dear Sullivan——'"

"'Dear *Mr.* Sullivan'!"

She hastily scrawled the emendation.

"'As you know, I have recently been——'" She paused, and in her mortification bent low over the page. Her cheeks darkened, and Steele at that moment was visited by an inspiration. He was still too young in authority to be given the power to employ and to dismiss, but it occurred to him that there was no legislation to prevent Miss Hastings from resigning. Very well—she should resign!

"'Appointed,'" he said, dryly.

"Oh, yes!" Her relief was great. "'Appointed manager.'"

"'*Assistant* manager,'" he corrected, still more dryly.

She appealed to him by means of her puissant eyes.

"I'm afraid I can't take dictation as fast as that yet," she said. "The rest of it's—rather confused, too."

Steele sighed audibly, and scowled at poor Miss Hastings.

"See what you can do with it, anyway," he said. "Just end it, 'Yours very truly.'"

"But—it wasn't *finished!*"

"Never mind; I want to see how you space and—punctuate." He reflected, and tacked on, as an afterthought, "and spell."

"You mean——"

"Transcribe just what you have," said Steele, desperately. He reached out for his hat and energetically rose to his feet. "And put it on my desk. And if anybody asks for me, you can say I've gone out. Say I've gone up to see Mr. M. J. Sullivan."

He didn't return until three o'clock in the afternoon. He slowly pushed open the door that had his name on it, and went in circumspectly. Miss Hastings, who had already reproduced the letter four times, refusing to allow a single erasure or deviation from the mathematical accuracy of alignment, was testing the advantage of a fresh ribbon in the typewriter. As Steele entered, she looked up smilingly; for the long interval of solitude had refreshed her, and as she had laboured with the trifling duty, her spirits had risen until she was radiantly cheerful. Her smile was the involuntary reflection of her mood; but to Steele it appeared positively brazen—because he wasn't in the best of temper, and his apprehensions had gradually been fermenting.

"Well," he said, gruffly, "how are you getting on?"

For answer, she laid the fifth copy of the letter on his blotter. In her anxiety to assure herself that it was minutely perfect, she delayed to examine it once more over his shoulder. Steele, uncomfortable at the proximity, moved about in his chair.

"I *hope* it's all right," she said.

Steele nodded, and looked up. It was in that instant that he had an illuminating flash of intuition which served to double his discomfort. She was so feverishly ingenuous; it was incredible to the man, in spite of his information and belief, that she could really be the crafty diplomat he had pictured her. And Miss Hastings, watching Steele narrowly, was similarly overtaken by a novel impression, which was that, after all, he might be comparatively respectable.

"It is," said Steele. "Thank you very much."

"You're quite welcome," said Miss Hastings.

At least, there was a sort of armistice.

But on the morrow they were both constrained again, and carefully on guard.

On this second morning Steele compelled himself to dictate a dozen letters simply for the sake of moral effect; and Miss Hastings, now that she was nerved to the occasion, missed hardly a pothook. Thereafter he became abstracted; and once he blurted out a thought that never should have had that much publicity.

"Miss Hastings," he said, unexpectedly, "do you ever read novels?"

He was instantaneously chagrined; he hadn't meant to ask her the question point-blank.

"Not many now—I used to," she said, puzzled. "Why?"

"Nothing," said Steele, florid to the ears. He had made a tactical error, and it galled him, because he foresaw that he would be misjudged.

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What she was thinking was that Steele looked like an illustration of a hero in his office.

"Something in this circular," lied Steele, waving the prospectus of a brass foundry as an alibi, "reminded me of it."

"Really!"

"Romance of business, you know," he went on, endeavouring to cover his tracks. "The chap who owns this concern married his——"

"Married whom?"

"It was as good as a novel," said Steele, hurriedly. "Suppose you take a letter to the Hoyt Motor Company."

In the course of another week he had made a dozen blunders, not all as bad as this one, but all bad enough to anger him. And as Steele lost his equipoise in striving so constantly to maintain it, he hadn't the pleasure of comprehending that Miss Hastings was baffled too.

She had often thought that she was living through one chapter of a romance. Steele was astoundingly young to have achieved such a record; he was obviously destined to great business successes in the future. Miss Hastings hadn't considered herself as an actual party to the performance; she had viewed it only from the point of the bystander. But she had caught the dramatic value of it, and given it her appreciation. She was repeatedly guilty of visualizing the subsequent chapters.

At about that stage of their acquaintance, it incidentally became Miss Hastings's duty to write a letter of the greatest importance, giving an intricate list of tabulated prices which Steele dictated slowly and carefully after much research and deliberation. Miss Hastings, while so engaged, made an heroic attempt to exclude the man from her mind. She had scarcely thumped down the last full stop when Steele, after answering the telephone feverishly, demanded the sheet.

"Done?" he queried, impatiently. "Don't bother to read it—I'm late now! I'll stick it in my pocket. Thank you!" And departed rapidly for an overdue appointment.

He came back hesitantly and without his usual springiness. His expression, as he gave Miss Hastings the full benefit of it, was woebegone. Her heart sank like a plummet.

Steele leaned against his desk, and looked at her. There was a trace of humour in his gaze, and yet it was a brand of humour closely related to tragedy.

"Well," he said, presently, "I don't suppose you did it on purpose, but——"

"*What?*" she faltered. "Did *what*, Mr. Steele?"

"I went," said Steele, speaking very meticulously, "for a final consultation on this contract. It ran into two thousand pounds. And when I got there I was *almost* too late. They'd practically closed with another firm. But I got in for just a few minutes. It was a long shot, but they let me in. I had to talk pretty fast. And all of a sudden the right instant came—those times are mighty ticklish; you've got to win or lose on the spot. And I put this letter"—he drew it from his pocket—"on the table. And my man took one look at it—and *laughed*—and started to chip me about it. And that killed the sale. I did my best to get him up to the scratch again, but it was all over. See what you think of it."

He gave her the letter, and Miss Hastings viewed it breathlessly. The first two paragraphs were faultlessly executed. Then came the place where the tabulated figures should have been. But they were omitted, and Miss Hastings paled.

The sheet slipped from her fingers and fluttered to the floor. She was white to the lips, and was forced to clutch the corner of a filing cabinet for support. She knew that the error was worth more than her year's income.

"That cost us," said Steele, "just about two hundred pounds clear profit."

He shrugged his shoulders and walked to his desk.

Miss Hastings pivoted so as to follow his course. She couldn't remove her eyes from his stern-set countenance. She knew that her offence had been heinous; and yet she knew that she wasn't altogether to blame. Steele had taken the letter before she had verified it; and confessedly he hadn't read it himself before submitting it to his client. At the same time, she knew that she hadn't been entirely focused on that letter when she had typed it.

"It's better not to make any excuses," said Steele, gloomily. "Those things do happen."

"I wasn't making any excuses," she denied. "I'm just—s-sorry!" Two insurgent tears left their home and marked twin trails leading in the direction of her nose. She quivered in a little spasm of wretchedness, and it wasn't solely for herself that she was grieved; it was partly for Steele.

He raised his head, and was palsied at the crisis. The sight of a woman crying invariably moved him to the utmost. He swallowed hard.

"Don't bother about it," he said. "It's all in the day's work. Only let's be more careful."

But, as she neither mended her mood nor attempted to hide it, Steele was inclined

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toward irritation. He tapped his foot impatiently on the floor. He frowned at her. And then, out of the gaucheries of his past, he was overcome by certain recollections. Thrice he had been hoodwinked by girls who wept, only to discover later that they had summoned their tears as a solvent to disguise their coquetry. He contemplated Miss Hastings with mingled doubt and cynicism. He revived his earlier distrust of her, and of her motives. He was rapidly verging upon a definite conclusion when Miss Hastings, as she slowly veered toward her own desk, sniffed.

"Oh, *come!*" he said, paternally.

Out of the silence, another sniff. Steele got up, and strode round the obstructions.

"Now, look here," he said, philosophically. "It's too bad—it's a shame. But your young life isn't blasted yet—nor mine, either. Now I come to think of it, you didn't have time to go over it, did you? Well, I didn't have time to go over it myself. It's one of those awful messes that everybody gets into ever so often——"

She was sitting erect, motionless, fighting to dominate herself. Her posture should have suggested bravery to Steele; instead, he thought that she was still on the down grade. Without the slightest introspection, and with the sole purpose of assuring her that she could henceforward be consoled, he patted her shoulder. Then he was frozen with amazement at what he had done; and he had cause to be.

Miss Hastings hadn't heard him cross the room. She hadn't suspected that he was near her. But that touch on her shoulder restored, with cumulative interest, the dread with which she had begun her secretaryship. Instinct was strong within her, and Miss Hastings was already overwrought.

She didn't shrink from him in terror; and she didn't say, "How *dare* you!" and suit her gesture to the melodrama; for she was neither cowardly nor theatrical. She only looked at him; but she accomplished what she wanted. She fancied that she could see him shrivelling as he stood.

Steele wheeled sharply and went back to his seat.

It was within a few minutes of the closing hour. The room was absolutely quiet. There was a rustling of papers. Steele eyed Miss Hastings; Miss Hastings ignored Steele, but perceived him nevertheless. They rose and simultaneously put on their hats and coats. Miss Hastings, ostensibly coercing a wrinkle or two, was waiting for Steele to apologize; Steele was giving Miss Hastings an opportunity to close the incident on good terms.

"Good evening," said Miss Hastings, coolly.

He had forfeited his right to any further expression of regrets; he had cancelled her outstanding indebtedness, and left a prodigious balance in her favour.

"Good evening," said Steele.

They went into the corridor, and to the street. They separated. They each took half-a-dozen steps. They paused. They turned. And as each saw the message on the other's face they turned again, much more quickly, and made off in opposite directions.

"Minx!". said Steele to himself. "She thought she had me! Yah!"

"The brute!" said Miss Hastings. "The *brute!* He thought—he thought—I don't know *what* he thought!"

And the next day was very like the first morning of their foregathering.

In the weeks that followed, Steele, although he never managed to shake his individuality quite free of Miss Hastings's influence, nevertheless got into the swing of his routine, and business thrived under his direction. He was enabled to do this only by the cultivation of a curious attitude toward his environment; he had compelled himself to de-humanize Miss Hastings. He couldn't permit himself to think specifically of her, because she always dissipated his attention. In fact, he scarcely allowed himself to look at her.

He was now unshakably convinced, as he had been at the beginning of things, that she was intent on conquest. He congratulated his own sagacity when, now and then, he observed that she had done something ultra-feminine and decoying, as, for example, when she appeared with an adornment of flowers, or with a new ribbon, or a new hat, or even new silk shoelaces.

He got to be rather a clever detective in matters of this sort. Within two minutes from the opening of the office, he knew whether she had spread a fresh pitfall, and, if so, of what it consisted.

Miss Hastings, whose temporary confidence in Steele had been destroyed so instantaneously, was equally sagacious. She could tell from Steele's squared chin and his deep-set eyes that he was a man of staying power, of great endurance, and that he depended for his victories upon patience and persistence. Not for one moment did he deceive her by his feigned indifference. She practised a quaint little indifference of her own; she showed him as plainly as she could that she was apprised of his true character, and, now that she knew her ground, she was fully competent to take care of herself.

Their communications, then, were along the lines of an informal ritual.

"Miss Hastings," Steele would say, with

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"'IT'S BETTER NOT TO MAKE ANY EXCUSES,' SAID STEELE, GLOOMILY. 'THOSE THINGS DO HAPPEN.' 'I WASN'T MAKING ANY EXCUSES,' SHE DENIED. 'I'M JUST—SORRY!'"

an intonation cunningly implying that he was about to reproach her.

"Yes, Mr. Steele!" And Miss Hastings, prettily alert, but incredibly impersonal, would discover him intent on a memorandum.

"Would it inconvenience you to stay a bit late to-night?" This would be so modulated as to suggest that naturally he expected her to decline.

"No, not at all." Miss Hastings would pave the way to the inference that she was astonished at his question, since she existed only to further the aims of the office.

"I shouldn't ask you, but the Liverpool office has wired twice for these figures." This was a palpable extenuation.

"Oh, it's quite all right, Mr. Steele. They'll go by to-night's post." This was her intimation that she was interested in nothing but business.

"Half an hour ought to be enough. I have an appointment at six, anyway." He left nothing for her to cavil at.

"I'll get them out to-night."

And, having terminated the episode, Miss Hastings would revert instantly to her typewriter, and Steele would generally contrive to get the door to the corridor open, in order that she wouldn't be suspicious of his purpose. Miss Hastings would usually scheme to get it closed again, in order to demonstrate to Steele her contempt for his logic.

They behaved most queerly, too, when sometimes their eyes happened to meet directly, with no latitude for either of them to avoid the meeting. On these occasions they both showed conspicuous trepidation —showed it by reflex, or by a heightening of colour.

Steele often wondered why he didn't go straight to his chief and insist—absolutely insist—that Miss Hastings be transferred. He had failed to arraign her for inefficiency; for it was only on the very first morning, and when she had omitted those quotations, that she had proved incapable. She didn't seem to have sense enough to resign; and Steele gave up hoping for it. He didn't realize that he was really enjoying this *contretemps* with fire; it was risky, but it had its charms. He was curious to see how Miss Hastings was going to handle her materials.

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And now that he was armoured by experience, he had quite reversed his earlier theory. Instead of having one chance in a thousand, he adjudged that he had nine hundred and ninety-nine; but caution was still his watchword, and he never ignored that thousandth as a possibility.

One day he went to lunch with an elderly departmental manager who was eloquent on the subject of typists.

"Confound it all," said the elderly man, intolerantly. "We have the worst lot of key-pounders I ever saw in my *life!* It's something awful! I can't get a letter done decently with any speed. They're all lazy and incompetent. Oh, *you* haven't anything to kick about. You're lucky."

"I am!" said Steele. "How do you make that out?"

The elderly man grinned.

"Well," he said, "you've got the pick of the whole collection. What more do you want?"

Steele regarded him quizzically.

"Ever heard me say so?" he asked.

"No; but you're wise. If you said too much, somebody would grab her away from you."

"Let 'em grab," said Steele. "I sha'n't weep."

The elderly man was highly amused.

"It's been tried more than once, old boy."

"When?" asked Steele, amusedly.

"Oh, any number of times. The advertising department wanted her, and the secretary wanted her, and—if you've got to know the awful truth—we wanted her for our work. But we didn't get her."

"Why not?" Steele was growing uncomfortable.

"Think anybody could pry her away from you? Not a hope! You're a little tin god on wheels, you are! The other girls are always kidding her about it."

"Oh, they are, are they?"

Steele was aghast.

"And, you take it from me," said the other, impressively, "you can hire brains, and you can hire hands, but you can't hire loyalty. You're certainly lucky."

Steele made no immediate response, but he was thoughtful, and, to some extent, worried. It came as surprising news to him that Miss Hastings had displayed loyalty so noteworthy as to excite comment, and he couldn't imagine what she had to be loyal about. He was depressed; he felt as if he had been ambushed, even while he was wideawake. She *liked* to work for him, did she? Well, he could deal with that. "If I ever get to be the absolute head of the business," he said, soberly, "I'll be hanged if there's a woman in the whole show."

When he returned to the office he was still distraught. Miss Hastings was out, and Steele was unconscionably relieved. He leisurely set about the collation of loose-ends from the morning; he progressed rapidly until he came to a hiatus which could be filled only by a letter which he had dictated at eleven o'clock.

In the hope of finding the transcript on Miss Hastings's desk, he went over to hunt for it. There was a jumble of papers lying alongside the machine. He picked them up together; and saw under the pile two cuttings. One was a brief article which he had recently written for a trade journal, and it included a half-tone picture of himself. Steele grimaced, and stooped to investigate the second cutting. It was a bit of verse from a magazine, and it was entitled:—

A KISS.

Listen!
For I can't say it above a whisper,
So please listen——

I knew you were going to kiss me.
I knew it *weeks* ago,
Sooner or later,
Some day, some hour,
You'd kiss me——

Glorious ultimate!
But listen,
At least, *look* attentive!
Isn't it funny, I knew it so well,
Knew that you were—going to kiss me?

Nirvana!
Listen, and tell me,
Is it because you are you,
Or because I am I,
Or because you kiss every girl that you know?
None of these reasons you acknowledge?

And it's all just because—
I knew you were going to kiss me—
And you *did*—
Again—and again——!

Steele replaced the cuttings carefully; and jumbled the letters over them. His eyebrows were drawn down tightly, and his lips were thin and straight. His jaw was firm and tense, as if his teeth were very close together. There was a blot of angry red above his cheek-bones.

"Enough is enough," said Steele bitterly to himself, "and *too* much is a great, great plenty!" He scowled at Miss Hastings's desk, and formed his wisest judgment. "She finishes here on Saturday," he determined with finality. "Ab-so-lute-ly!"

And went over to the chief's office in order to be absent from the room when Miss Hastings came in. He knew that he couldn't look at her and keep his temperamental balance. The chief told him that henceforth he could arrange the matters of assistance as he saw fit. And Steele, instead of exulting, was unreasonably pensive.

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There were two days until Saturday, and for two days Steele didn't earn so much as a beggarly fraction of his salary. He couldn't expel from his mind the decision he had made, and what it would mean to him. He couldn't refrain from watching Miss Hastings, and from studying intently every detail that had to do with her charm. He couldn't forget her, not even when he had left the office at night. Saturday found him vacillating and restive

At nine o'clock he resolved to enlighten her at once; at half-past nine he thought it would be kinder to wait until noon. At ten he wondered if he ought to give her a further trial; forty minutes later he was disconsolate at the prospect of doing without her. Eleven o'clock came, and Steele was painfully nervous. He was sorrowful, but adamant in his decision. And then, after nearly an hour of torment, he knew that he had been influenced by a pathetic fallacy; he must end it now and for ever. He cleared his throat.

"Miss Hastings," he said.

"Yes, Mr. Steele."

He cleared his throat again. She was looking at him, and, as always, he was unquiet under her glance.

"How long have you been here, Miss Hastings?"

"Just six months," she said.

"That's right. We usually take on new people for six months' trial."

She continued to look at him, but said nothing. Steele observed, however, a flicker of uncertainty in her eyes, and he was glad—the idea was probably dawning on her, so it wouldn't come to her as a shock.

"I told you it wouldn't be easy."

"But I've *liked* it," she said.

"Really?"

Steele's imagination was captured anew by her loveliness; he began to feel like a cruel despot. She was unquestionably hindering his career—and yet, how she embellished the sombre office!

"Really and truly," she said.

"Well——" He was somewhat abashed; he temporized by clearing his throat.

"Now, about the future." She didn't help him out with a single syllable. "Unfortunately——"

He couldn't bring himself to utter the dismissal; and, as he met her eyes, he was maddeningly conscious that he didn't want to. He didn't want her to go; he didn't want her to stay. What on earth *was* it he wanted?

"You see," said Steele, "it's like this." And he began to tear small sections from his blotter. "I haven't been certain of how well satisfied you are. As a matter of fact, I don't believe you *like* office work, do you?"

He glanced up, and felt his heart flutter.

"I—I'm doing the best I can," said Miss Hastings.

She was applying herself sharply to a diagnosis of his meaning. His own lack of poise was premonitory, and she hadn't yet disposed of all her innate assortment of qualms.

"Yes—I know," said Steele.

He rose abruptly and went to the window, peered out, and slowly faced Miss Hastings. As it happened, he caught her unawares. There was no mistaking the proper translation of her look to him, and spontaneously Steele was no employer, but a mere man. The significance of all this fluctuation of mood was suddenly clear to him, and it was paralyzing in its purport.

He stammered, and put out his hand aimlessly. A succession of visions trooped across his brain. He saw his friend, the elderly departmental manager, laughing at him. He saw himself on that first morning solemnly weighing his chances. He saw himself, in the past, spending lonely evenings during which he expended an astonishingly large amount of time in reflecting upon the vagaries of men and women. He saw Miss Hastings cutting gaps in the trade journals. He saw the other girls taunting her with her fealty to him, who didn't deserve it. He saw his chief, humorously grave, reminding him of his impulsiveness. And, finally, he saw Miss Hastings in the flesh, there before him. Steele wavered, and fell. The thousandth chance had overtaken him.

"And still," he said, a trifle unsteadily, "I don't know. I don't know whether this is the sort of thing you *ought* to be doing——"

She was also on her feet now, staring at him in panic.

"Mr. Steele!"

With the sensation that he was carrying out his predestination, he walked swiftly to her side. There was no more irritation in him. He was placidly calm, save for the convulsion in his heart.

"At twelve o'clock to-day," he said, never taking his eyes from hers, "this engagement ends——"

And, before he could complete the sentence, a clock outside began to boom the hour of noon. Miss Hastings winced. Then there was dead silence.

She turned, and fumbled at her desk. Steele came yet closer.

"And as for your *next* engagement," he said, "can you make up your mind about it now?"

She caught her breath.

"If you can," said Steele, "I—wish you would. I think I must—*need* you!"

In the corridor outside there was the

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tramping of many feet, and the sound of chattering and laughter. The place was semi-public, and privacy wasn't long to be continued. But as Miss Hastings turned to Steele he forgot about all this. He forgot that this was his doom unescapable; he forgot everything but the reality of the present.

His arms went out and round her. He was looking down into the eyes which had so confused and baffled him; he was bending toward her lips, and he had reached them. His world burst into radiant colour, and he had ceased for all time to be Steele, the hardened cynic.

Then the knob of the door rattled, and they sprang apart. The door swung open, and two of Steele's friends—unobserving fellows—were on the threshold. Rebuffed, they went away, leaving the door open. And Steele and Miss Hastings, avowed



"ONCE OR TWICE, QUICKLY BUT EVER SO THOROUGHLY, HE KISSED HER. 'I KNEW THIS WAS GOING TO HAPPEN,' HE SAID."

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lovers for hardly a quarter of a minute, looked at each other from the opposite sides of the room. Closing the door, Steele leaped towards the girl. Once or twice, quickly but ever so thoroughly, he kissed her; and then he snatched her hat from the near-by rack and thrust it into her hands.

"Come on—hurry!" he said. "Let's get out of doors! It's *impossible* here! We'll get away somewhere where we can *talk*."

She was smoothing her hair as well as she could; and Steele was standing behind her, complicating the process.

"I *knew* this was going to happen," he said, suddenly.

"D-did you?"

"Always," said Steele. "But—tell me, *where* did you find that verse that begins—'Listen! For I can't say it above a whisper'?"

She was brilliantly crimson, and her hands shook.

"Why, how did *you* know?" she gasped. "I—I found it——"

"I saw it on your desk," said Steele.

"Why, I—I found it——"

"On the floor?"

"Yes! I——"

"I wondered where I'd dropped it," said Steele. "I'd only cut it out that morning, and——"

She was in his arms again, her face close to his shoulder.

"But I did know!" she breathed. "I knew it ever so long ago!"

"That's why I cut it out," said Steele.

"So did *I!*"

And, hand-in-hand, they slipped down the great stairs, out into the world of sunshine.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No 76.

(The Fourth of the Series.)

WHO dwells herein must take the greatest heed
That no projectile from his hand do speed.

1. It may the outcome be of furious bout
But shuffle, and a bird will soon fly out.

2. Though as a Pope his station would be high,
Still higher we may find him—in the sky.

3. Here is the word he said: "I pray thee, then,
Write me as one who loves his fellow-men."

4. No Chancellor should make it his chief aim,
Though he may find it welcome all the same.

5. Seeking the figure needed, here at least,
We get a chance between the south and east.

QUÆSTOR.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 77.

PURPLE or yellow, number *one*
Tells us that *two* is just begun.

1. If you are asked to be trustee,
Gilt-edged is this security.

2. For rougher work it never fails,
But do not use it on your nails.

3. 'Tis always found within a bed,
Yet on it no man lays his head.

4. A novelist well known to fame
With a musician shares this name.

5. This beast is often seen, but you
Will never find him in the Zoo.

6. Beneath the tree was childhood's bliss;
There, too, the murderer's fate is *this*.

KING COLE.

Answers to Acrostics Nos. 76 and 77 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on February 10th.*

The solution to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper; a second answer may be sent to any or every light, and should be written at the side of the first one; at the foot of each solution every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else. This pseudonym should be limited to one word.

ANSWER TO No. 75.

1.	L	o	B
2.	O	a	R
3.	N	i m s h	I
4.	D	o d	D
5.	O	f f i n	G
6.	N	a m	E

NOTE.—Light 3. Jehu.

RESULT OF THE TWELFTH SERIES.

The complete series of six acrostics was answered correctly by Aber, Assam, Crotal, Fifi, Flapper, Manora, Monachus, Roc, Scarsdale, Silex, Somerford, and Yoko. Of these twelve solvers, Manora and Yoko, who won prizes in the eleventh series, are ineligible for a prize now; and Manora, Scarsdale, and Silex did not conform to the rule (printed with the last acrostic of the set) that competitors must send their names and addresses with the final solution. The other eight will divide the prizes, receiving a guinea and a half each; they will be ineligible during the thirteenth series, now running.

The successful solvers are: Aber, Mr. W. W. Grundy, University College, Cardiff; Assam, Mr. Gordon Plater, 15, Claremont Road, Westcliff, Southend-on-Sea; Crotal, Miss G. W. Hughes, Brier Hill, Northampton; Fifi, Mr. D. F. Ferguson, Royal Naval College, Dartmouth; Flapper, Mr. J. Charrington, Shenley Grange, Barnet, Herts; Monachus, Mr. D. G. Robertson, Torrie, Enborne Road, Newbury, Berks; Roc, Mr. R. C. Oakley, Dunchurch Hall, Rugby; Somerford, Mrs. Roper Tyler, Barton House, Tetbury, Glos.

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RICARDO BROOK —Humorist.

IF you asked Mr. Ricardo Brook "how he began," he would tell you that it was as a junior in the chambers of a barrister M.P. in the Temple. And he would probably add, were he in a confiding mood, that he spent much of his time in filling all the available office stationery with sketches of the various judges and legal lights of the day. He was only sixteen, it is true, but such conduct was hardly likely to lead to the Woolsack, and his first "acceptance," coming at about this time, definitely turned his thoughts away from the Temple. This first published work of his was a series of three sketches depicting the mistake of an illiterate billposter who, by posting a tailor's advertisement over part of a famous actress's poster, made the latter invite the public to "Come and see Mrs. —— in Someone's 8s. 11d. trousers." It appeared in a now-defunct London comic paper, and the editor, in a moment of mistaken prodigality, sent him half a crown for the masterpiece! Quite undeterred by this, however, he persuaded his relatives that



BARBER: "My tonic 'air-restorer is to the bald 'ead what the beneficent spray is to the blighted toober."



HYSTERICAL STOREKEEPER: "Direckerly I see 'im drivin' 'is motor through my shop-winder I could tell 'e was one o' these 'ere joy-riders."

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Art and not Law was his *forte*, and got them to apprentice him to a well-known firm of lithographers, in whose studio he acquired a knowledge of lithography



CRITICAL BUTCHER: "Who ever saw feathers on a skewer?"

and of process and colour work which has since been of the greatest service to him.

His aptitude for humorous drawing having been mentioned by a friend to a music-publisher, the latter gave him his first "outside" commission. This was to design a cover for a barn dance—the jazz of the period. The publisher, having approved the design, was kind enough to lend the litho-



CALL BOY (to Villain): "The Controller's cut off the limelight, sir. The manager will be obliged if you'll make up your face emerald-green for the murder scene."



SEERESS: "Do you seek to probe the future or to learn of some absent dear one?"

AFFLICTED DOMESTIC: "Lor' no, mum. I just wondered if you could put me on to a charm to cure the hiccups."



IMAGINATIVE LITTLE GIRL: "Fancy, mother, only yesterday I may have been bathing with this bloater!"

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WAR CRITIC: "'Ow can we trust the 'Uns? They carn't trust each other—'ave to 'ave lids on their pipes an' beer mugs."

stone to the young artist, so that he could complete the work, and Mr. Brook recalls to this day his perspiring voyage across London with the heavy stone—which probably weighed as much as he did—and the dismay of his fellow-passengers when it nearly crashed through the bottom of the vehicle.

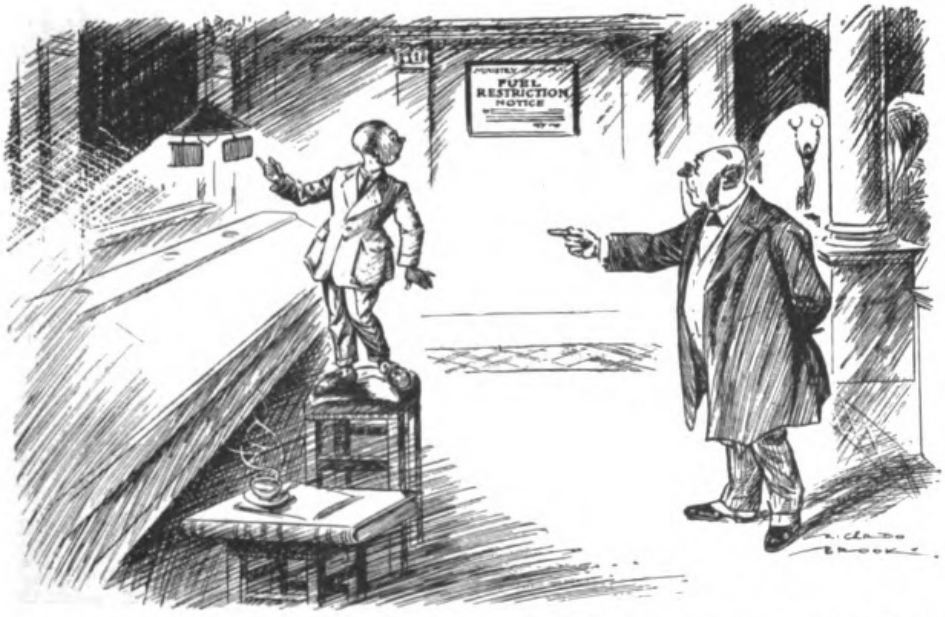
Meanwhile, his liking for caricature was as keen as ever, and not being pleased with the effect of a pictorial poster his firm had printed for one of Phil May's lecturing tours, he did a sketch himself, which so tickled Phil May that he was good enough to prophesy a future for him in that direction.



THE THIRST FOR EDUCATION.

MOTHER: "Wot's all this 'ubbub goin' on indoors?"

DAUGHTER: "Baby's bin and licked 'Erbert's 'ome lessons orf 'is slate."

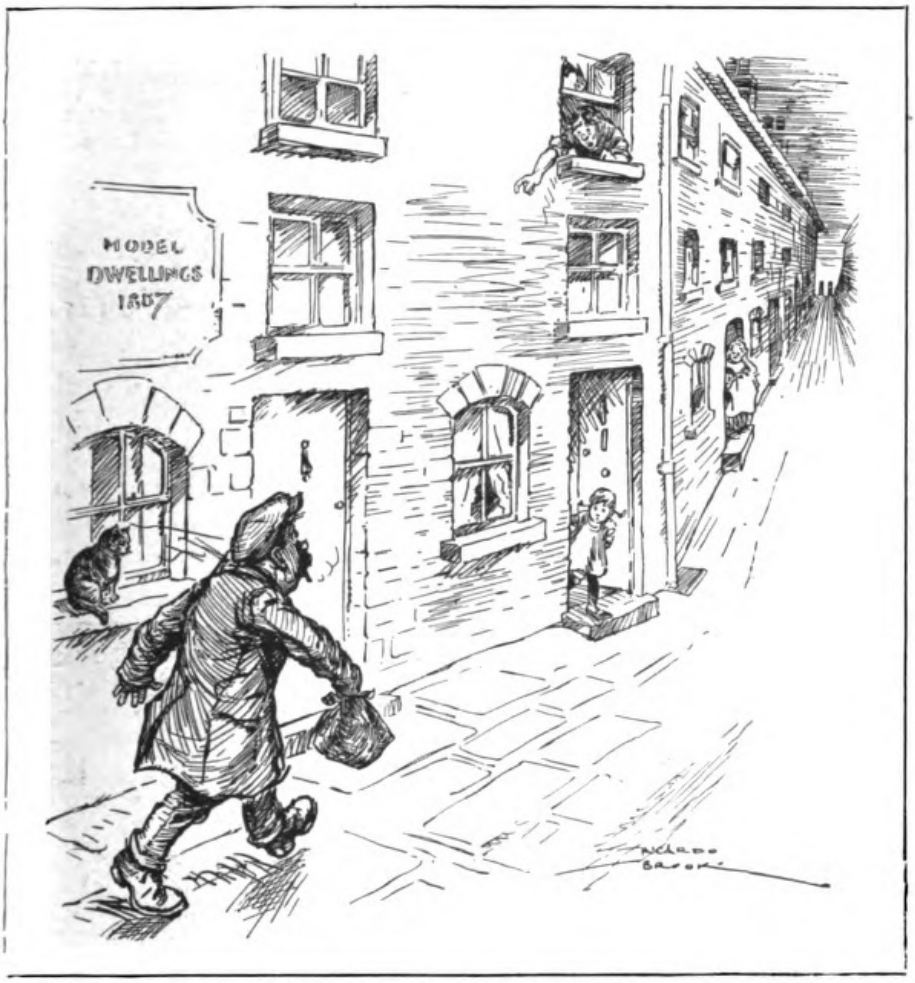


MINISTRY OFFICIAL: "No need to screen the lights now, my boy. D'you think the war's still on?"

INFATUATED OFFICE BOY: "I was trying to make Miss Jenkins a bit of toast, sir."

Then came a period in the studios of various art printers and advertising houses, and in this sphere he frequently introduced a humorous element into his poster and other designs, and so caused his name to become familiar to an ever-widening circle. "Candid critics," he says, "told me that *all* my efforts were unconsciously funny; but I think I may claim that I produced many humorous advertisement designs which achieved

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WORKER'S WIFE: "Urry up, father. One of our chickens 'as laid a egg in next door's pianner!"

popularity." About this time he began to contribute to a number of humorous papers, and later kept readers of the *Morning Leader* and the *Star* amused with a long series of political cartoons.

The most cursory glance at the drawings here reproduced will show that Mr. Brook possesses an unusual aptitude for seizing upon—and emphasizing—the quaint and humorous side of things in this workaday world, and for presenting them to us from an unexpected point of view. His eye is ever on the alert for subjects among the humdrum affairs of everyday life, and what his eye sees his pencil records with a whimsicality all his own.

His work is frequently seen in *Punch*, and it is a fact worth noting that the first drawing he sent to its offices was accepted. "It was," he says, "a small imaginative effort showing our most distinguished Manx novelist on a pilgrimage to discover a bookshop that did *not* stock his latest masterpiece."

Readers of *Punch* and other papers have been liberal in the matter of supplying him with ideas for sketches, but his experience has been that editors have not looked with a kindly eye on these combined efforts. He relies, therefore, on his own imagination for the ideas and dialogue in practically all his work. Chance remarks heard in his wanderings often suggest a subject, but "just sitting and thinking them" is his usual method of getting "notions," a method for which, he confesses, he fortunately seems to have an aptitude.



MEAT SHORTAGE IN BINGOLAND.

Suspicious housewife discovers butcher hoarding an elephant for book customers.

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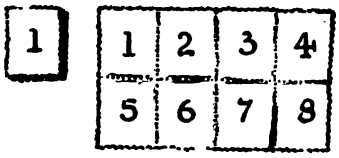
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PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

490.—FOLDING POSTAGE-STAMPS.

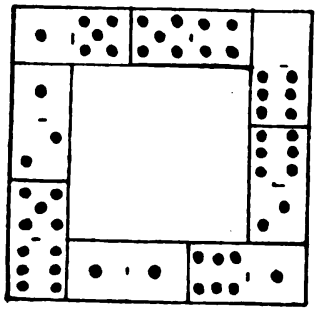
If you have eight postage-stamps, 4 by 2, as in the diagram, it is very interesting to discover the various ways in which they can be folded so that they all lie under one stamp, as shown. I will say at once that they can actually be folded in forty different ways so that No. 1 is face upwards and all the others invisible beneath it. Nos. 5, 2, 7, and 4 will always be face downwards, but you may arrange for any stamp, except No. 6, to lie next to No. 1, though there are only two ways each in which 7 and 8 can be brought into that position. From a little law that I discovered, I was convinced that they could be folded in the order 1, 5, 6, 4, 8, 7, 3, 2, and also 1, 3, 7, 5, 6, 8, 4, 2, with No. 1 at the top, face upwards, but it puzzled me for some time to discover how. Can the reader so fold them, without, of course, tearing any of the perforation? Try it with a piece of paper well creased like the diagram and number the stamps on both sides for convenience. It is a fascinating puzzle. Do not give it up as impossible!



491.—A LITTLE TRAIN PUZZLE.

A non-stop express, going sixty miles an hour, starts from Bustletown for Ironchester, and another non-stop express, going forty miles an hour, starts at the same time from Ironchester for Bustletown. How far apart are they exactly an hour before they meet? As I have failed to find these cities on any map, or in any gazetteer, I cannot state the distance between them, so we will just assume that it is something over 250 miles. If this puzzle gives the reader much trouble he will smile when he sees the answer next month!

492.—DOMINO FRAMES.



Take an ordinary set of twenty-eight dominoes and return double 3, double 4, double 5, and double 6 to the box as not wanted. Now, with the remainder form three square frames, in the manner of the one shown, so that the pips in every side shall add up alike. In the example given the sides sum to 15. If this were to stand, the sides of the two other frames must also sum to 15. But you can take any number you like and it will be seen that it is not required to place 6 against 6, 5 against 5, and so on.

493.—SNUFFING DOING.

A correspondent seeks an answer to the following. One is always prepared for puzzles that are mere hoaxes, having no possible answer, but this does not look like one of them. There is probably some catch or trick in the thing, but I confess it has eluded me. Perhaps some reader may know the answer or suggest some possible solution.

"A merchant died, leaving 34,342,200 pairs of snuffers to be divided equally between his two sons. When the executor did so he found there was only one pair for each."

From an old pocket-book, dated December, 1860.

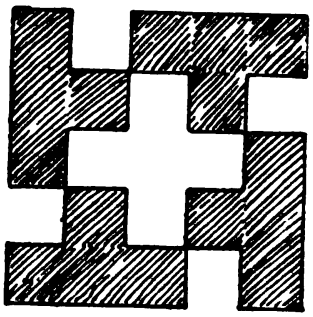
494.—MISSING WORDS.

In this puzzle (by Mr. T. Kent) the same letters are used to form five different missing words, but in the last line they form two words:—

Base . . . . . of the sword, the felon Hun
With proud ambition . . . . . in brutish might
To seek . . . . —his standard in the sun—
. . . . . earth's plan and mock for ever Right.
But each brave . . . . . in the Allied fight
Did shout ". . . . . " until the day was won.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

485.—A NEW GREEK CROSS PUZZLE.



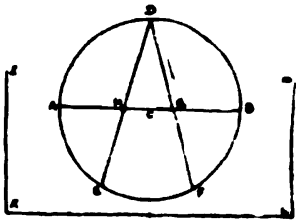
Place the four pieces together in the manner shown and the symmetrical Greek Cross will be found in the centre.

486.—GENEROUS DOLES.

At first there were 20 persons and each received 6s. Then 15 persons (five fewer) would have received 8s. each. But 24 (four more) appeared and only received 5s. each. The amount distributed weekly was thus 120s.

487.—SQUARING THE CIRCLE.

If you make a rectangle with one side equal to the diameter and the other three times the diameter, then the diagonal will be something near correct. In fact, in figures it would be 1 to 3·1622. The method I recommend is the following.



In the diagram A B is the diameter. Bisect the semicircle in D. Now, with the radius A C mark off the points E and F from A and B and draw the lines D E and D F. The distance D G added to the distance G H gives a quarter of the length of the circumference (I K), correct within a five-thousandth part. I K L M is the length of complete straight line. I could give another way, correct to a seventeen-thousandth part, but it is a little more difficult.

488.—A MUTILATED ANAGRAM.

The two English words are FABRICATED and BIFURCATED. In the first case A R T are taken as the three missing letters, and in the second case U R T.

489.—MISSING WORDS.

The following are the words in their order: Mites, emits, "Times," smite, 'tis me, items, is met, I stem, sit me.

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See Page 22.

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"SWIFT AS LIGHTNING HIS HAND SHOT OUT AND GRASPED THE SNAKE FIRMLY. SUCH A DISPLAY OF COOL, SWIFT COURAGE I HAVE NEVER SEEN."

(See page 209.)

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YELLOW MAGIC

By F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK GILLETT



THE talk of the half-dozen men on the veranda of the Singapore Club—a couple of merchants, a planter in town on business, an officer of an Indian regiment, a globe-trotting professor from an American university, and a sea-captain—had drifted desultorily from the specific instance of the famous Indian rope-trick, resuscitated by a British magazine that lay upon the club tables and contested sceptically by the Anglo-Indian officer, to the general topic of the alleged ability of the Asiatic to make people "see what isn't there." The American professor, whose speciality, as he confessed, was psychology, manifested a pertinacious interest in the subject. But his direct questions to these habitual dwellers in the Middle and Far East elicited only contemptuous negatives or vague second and third hand stories without evidential value. Merchants, planter, and officer alike had quite obviously none of them seen any tricks upon which the professor could safely base his rather rashly enunciated theory of special hypnotic powers possessed by the inscrutable races whose surface energies are so profitably exploited by the white man. He turned at last to the sea-captain, who had sat puffing at his cheroot in silence.

"And you, Captain Williamson? You have voyaged about these seas for the best part of a generation—have you never been confronted by one of these inexplicable phenomena of which the travellers tell us?"

Captain Williamson changed the duck-clad leg which crossed the other and smiled a little with his keen grey eyes. Caressing the neat pointed beard which accentuated the oval of his intelligent face, he replied, thoughtfully:—

"Well, professor—I have. Once. Personally, though I saw the affair with my own eyes, I don't even now know what to make of it. Perhaps your hypnotic theory might explain it." He shrugged his shoulders.

"Will you not tell us the story?" entreated the professor. "It is so rare to receive trustworthy first-hand evidence of anything abnormal."

Captain Williamson glanced rather diffidently around upon his companions.

"Fire away, cap'en!" exclaimed one of the merchants, slapping him amicably on the knee. "You've always got a good yarn."

"This happens to be a true one," said the captain, with a smile of tolerance, "but, of course, you are under no compulsion to believe it."

"Drinks all round on the one who doesn't!" decreed the planter. "Go ahead! Don't ask us to believe rubber is going to boom again, that's all. Short of that, we'll believe anything."

"Well," began Captain Williamson, his eyes following reflectively the long, deliberate puff of smoke he blew into the air, "perhaps some of you may remember Captain Strong—'lucky Jim Strong'? Twenty-five years or so ago he was one of the best-known skippers in the Pacific, celebrated almost. Men talked of him with a certain awe, as of a man who had a good fortune that was nothing short of uncanny. He had been engaged in all sorts of desperate enterprises, frequently illicit, and always he emerged unharmed and gorged with profits. Only all the San Francisco banks put together, for he dealt with all of them, could tell you what he was worth, but it was certainly a very large sum. However wealthy he was, he apparently derived very little enjoyment from his money. He was always at sea in his ship, the *Mary Gleeson*, of which he was both owner and skipper, and stayed in port only just long enough to discharge one cargo

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and pick up another. His personal habits were almost unknown, but of course a legend of eccentricity grew up around them as a companion to the legend of his supernatural luck.

"It happened, as the finale to sundry personal adventures with which I will not weary you, that about a quarter of a century ago I found myself sailing out of the port of San Francisco as first officer to the *Mary Gleeson*. I was quite a young man, and it was my first job as mate. We were bound to Saigon, in Cochin China, with a cargo of American arms and ammunition consigned to the French Government. At that time the French were still fighting to preserve and extend their conquests in that part of the world.

"The voyage across the Pacific was uneventful enough. We were a contented ship. The men were cheerful. The old uncertificated Scandinavian we had shipped as second mate was a conscientious officer. I was rather proud of my new dignity and anxious to justify it.

"As for Captain Strong, I unaffectedly liked him. Decisive but even-tempered, his quietly firm handling of the ship's company won my respect, and there was no doubt of his first-class seamanship. He was utterly without that petty punctilious pride by which some masters try to conceal their lack of native dignity, and he would talk to me for hours during my watch. His conversation revealed a wide and intimate knowledge of men and affairs, but upon his own personal adventures and career he was completely silent, and no stratagems of mine could lure him into speaking of them. Reserved as he was upon this point, nevertheless I felt that he regarded me with a distinctly friendly sentiment, and I cordially reciprocated it.

"At last we made the tall promontory of Cape St. Jacques, and took on board the half-caste pilot who was to navigate us the sixty miles up the river to Saigon. It was early morning when we crossed the bar, and, relieved from the direct responsibilities of navigation, Captain Strong and I sat all day in deck chairs under the awning of the bridge. The damp, close heat was suffocating, and neither of us had much desire to talk, but I fancied that a more than usually heavy moodiness lay over the skipper. He was certainly not quite normal. He frowned to himself, bit his lip, and his eyes roved in an uneasy sort of recognition from side to side of the stream as we rounded reach after interminable reach. I felt that some secret anxiety possessed him, but of course I could not ask him straight out what it was. Rather diffidently, I did venture on one question.

"'Ever been here before, sir?' I asked.

"He shot a suspicious look at me, directly into my eyes, before he answered.

"'Once.'

"The tone of that reply effectually checked any further exhibition of the curiosity it heightened.

"The worst heat of the day was over when we dropped anchor in the broad stream opposite the European-looking city of Saigon. To my pleasure, Captain Strong invited me to go ashore with him, and in a few minutes the gig was pulling us towards the rows of fine-looking Government buildings which stretch back from the quays.

"We went to the Government House and filled up a few dozens of those useless papers without which the French functionary dare do nothing, and received vague assurances that in a few days we should be allowed to unload the arms of which the French troops were in urgent need. Our business completed as far as possible, Captain Strong hesitated for a moment or two, biting his lip in that odd way I had noticed coming up the river. Irresolution of any kind was a most uncommon phenomenon in him. Then suddenly, evidently giving way to a powerful impulse, I heard him murmur to himself, 'Give 'em a chance, anyway!'

"Throwing a curt 'Come along!' to me, he set off at a tremendous pace through the streets with the assurance of a man who can find his way about any town where he has been once previously. I followed him, puzzled by the words I had overheard, wondering whither he was going, and noting the native population with curious eyes. The Annamite men are a stunted, degenerate race, in abject terror of their white masters, but the women are many of them surprisingly attractive. I had plenty of opportunity for comparison, for very soon we found ourselves among a swarm of both sexes at the station of the steam-tram which runs to Cho-lon, the Chinese town a few miles up the river.

"During the ride on the tram Captain Strong did not open his lips. He stared steadily in front of him in a curious kind of way, like a man inexorably pursuing some allotted line of action.

"Arrived at Cho-lon, he struck quickly through the squalid streets of the Chinese town, looking neither to right nor left, and saying not a word. We had passed right through the town before he gave me a hint of our objective. Then he made a gesture upwards, as if to reassure me that we were near our journey's end.

"Beyond the last houses, on an eminence backed by the primeval jungle, a Buddhist temple of pagoda fashion rose above us, the terminus of the rough track up which we were stumbling. As we drew near I saw

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that it was dilapidated, its courtyard overgrown, deserted evidently by both priests and worshippers.

"Was this what Captain Strong had come to see? Somewhat puzzled, I glanced at his face under the pith helmet. His lips were compressed, his eyes stern as though defying some secret danger. At the entrance gateway, festooned and almost smothered in parasitic vegetation, he stopped and stared into the desolate courtyard. Then, after a moment of the curious hesitation which I had already remarked that day, he entered.

"A deathlike stillness brooded over the place. The great doorless portal of the temple, flanked by huge and staring figures, confronted us, opening on to a black, unillumined interior like the entrance to a tomb. Weeds grew between the flags of the threshold. An atmosphere of indefinable evil, as though the very stones held the memory of some awful calamity, pervaded the silence. I shuddered in a sudden sense of the sinister in this abandonment, and glanced involuntarily at my companion as if from his face I might divine the cause. It was impossible to guess his thoughts. His jaw was locked hard, his face expressionless.

"Then I perceived that we were not alone. Slinking round the outer wall came a wretched-looking native. His long robe was torn and dirty His yellow face, lit by two slanting beady eyes, was emaciated and sunken. His shaven crown was wrinkled to the top. The limbs which protruded from his gown were as thin as sticks. In his hand he held a beggar's bowl. Remarking us, he stopped dead, watching us with his horribly bright, fever-like eyes. Instinctively, I don't know why, I put him down as the last of the priests, still haunting this once prosperous and now deserted temple.

"Captain Strong took no notice of him and advanced towards the portal. Somewhat apprehensively, I followed him and peered in, but the darkness, by comparison with the intense light outside, was so complete that I could see nothing. My curiosity getting the better of my nervousness, I stepped inside, though, I confess, rather gingerly. After a minute or two, my eyes accustoming themselves to the gloom, I could see the great bronze figure of the Buddha towering above me, facing the door. Its placid face, uplifted far above the passions of men, looked as though it were patiently awaiting the day when this abandonment should cease and its worshippers return to adoration of its serenity. No precious stone now reflected the light from the door, and the huge candlesticks on either side of it were empty, the days of their scintillating illumination long past.

"Captain Strong, I noticed, remained on the threshold, silhouetted black against the sunshine; but, emboldened by my impunity, I took another step or two forward. I recoiled quickly. Something stirred in the lap of the Buddha and a snake erected its head in a sudden movement. Its eyes gleamed at me from the shadow like two green precious stones.

"I swung round to shout a warning to Captain Strong. If there was one there were probably others of these deadly guardians of the divine image. There were. To my horror, I saw another snake uncoil itself from a crevice in the doorway, on a level with his neck, and draw its head back in the poise for the fatal dart. I don't know whether he heard my inarticulate cry. His perception of the danger was simultaneous with mine. But he made no blundering movement of confusion. Swift as lightning his hand shot out and grasped the snake firmly close under the head, where its fangs could not touch him. Then with a quick jerk he flung it into the courtyard. The snake writhed away in a flash.

"Such a display of cool, swift courage I have never seen before or since." I ran out to him where he stood in the courtyard gazing after the vanished snake, and excitedly expressed my admiration. He turned round on me with a grim smile and shrugged his shoulders. The wretched priest, if priest he was, had approached, and he smiled also, a foolish, exasperatingly inscrutable smile, like an idiot enjoying an imbecile esoteric meaning which is a meaning for him alone. Yet at the same time I thought there was a suggestion of sly menace in that cringing grin.

"'Come back into Saigon,' said Captain Strong, ignoring him. 'We'll have a drink before we go on board.' There was nothing in his manner to remind you that he had just escaped death by a fraction.

"I was not at all sorry to quit this unpleasant place, and I descended that rough path with considerably more alacrity than I had mounted it. Captain Strong was as coolly self-possessed as though walking down the main street of San Francisco.

"'I must congratulate you on your luck, sir,' I ventured, when we had gone a little distance. 'Had that snake struck a second before——'

"'Bah!' he replied, shrugging his shoulders. 'One can get tired of luck!'

"There was a violence, a sombre bitterness in his tone which impressed me. I thought of all the miraculous good-fortune which men attributed to him—a specimen of which I had just seen—and wondered whether he were really wearied of it. I could conceive it possible that a man of his type would find life very dull if assured beforehand of success and safety. It would

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be the struggle, the peril, which would appeal to him.

"He relapsed into a gloomy silence which I did not dare to break.

"We returned to Saigon on the steam-tram, and shortly afterwards we found ourselves seated on the deserted terrace of a *café*, trickling water through the sugar into our absinthe, for all the world as though we were in some bankrupt quarter of Marseilles. Natives thronged around us, pestering us to buy all sorts of worthless trifles in their horrible pidgin-French.

"Suddenly an insinuating voice whined into my ear some native words I could not understand, and repeated them with a wheedling insistence which compelled my attention. I looked round into an ugly yellow face whose malicious, narrow-slitted eyes glittered unprepossessingly above his fawning smile. There was something in the face that seemed familiar to me, and yet I could not place it. Under the conical bamboo hat all these Annamites looked alike to me. I waved him away, but he was not to be shaken off, reiterating over and over again his incomprehensible phrase.

"I glanced inquiringly at Captain Strong, whom I knew to understand many Chinese dialects.

"'He's a conjurer and wants to show you a trick,' he explained, contemptuously, adding a curt word and nod of assent to the native.

"The Annamite beamed idiotically and stretched out his skinny hands over the little table.

"'Vous—regarder,' he said, evidently making the most of his French, and grinned insinuatingly at me.

"With a slow, snaky motion of his skeleton-like hands he commenced to make passes in the air about six inches above my glass. I watched him, at first idly, but gradually more and more fascinated as my eyes followed the sinuous movements of his hands. Presently, to my astonishment, I saw the glass, tall and fairly heavy—a typical absinthe glass—commence to rock slightly on its base. The direction of the passes altered to a vertical up and down motion, as though his hands were encouraging the glass to rise. And sure enough, it detached itself from the table and, swaying a little unsteadily, rose into the air under the hands still some distance above it. It ascended slowly, as though he were drawing it up by a magnetic attraction, to an appreciable height from the table, say three or four inches. Then, as he changed the character of the passes again so that they seemed to press it down, it sank slowly once more to the table. The native, childishly pleased with this successful exhibition of his powers, grinned ingratiatingly at us both.

"Captain Strong threw a coin upon the marble top of the table. The fawning smile still upon his ugly face, the conjurer looked straight into the skipper's eyes as he gabbled some native words of thanks. Then, instead of picking up the coin, he suddenly seized his benefactor's hand in his skinny grasp and, using the captain's forefinger like a pen, traced upon the table-top a large ellipse which commenced and finished at the coin. The action was performed so unexpectedly, and with such swift strength, that Captain Strong had no time to resist. The ellipse completed, he flung aside the captain's finger and held both his hands outstretched above the invisible tracing. If I was astonished before, I was amazed now. Where the finger had passed over that marble glowed a flexible reddish-gold snake, holding in its mouth, like a pendant on a chain, not the coin, but a brilliantly-flashing jewel of precious stones, fashioned into a curious pattern. I heard a startled exclamation break from my companion, but before either of us could utter an articulate word the conjurer's hand had descended swiftly upon the table. A second later both jewel—or coin—and the conjurer had disappeared into the throng of watching Annamites.

"I glanced at Captain Strong. He was deathly pale, and one hand was feeling nervously over the breast of his silk shirt. Then, after a long breath, he turned and smiled at me.

"'Clever trick, that!' he said.

"The assumption of personal unconcern was so marked that I felt any remark of mine would have been an impertinence. But I could not help wondering what Captain Strong wore underneath his shirt.

"He paid the native waiter for our drinks and rose from the table without another word. We turned our steps towards the quay.

"'Come and have supper aft with me to-night, Mr. Williamson,' he said, carelessly. 'I meant to have invited you to dinner in town, but that restaurant was really too depressing.'

"I thanked him, secretly astonished at the invitation. Captain Strong never compromised his dignity by sitting at table with his officers. He ate alone, in the beautifully-fitted saloon under the poop. At the time I wondered whether he had some reason for preferring my company to his customary solitude. But his manner expressed merely the courtesy of a superior wishing to give pleasure to a young officer.

"We had arrived on the quay, and I was looking over the crowd of vociferating boatmen with a view to selecting a *sampan* for

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our return to the ship, when a sudden cry from the captain startled me.

" ' Look ! Good heavens ! Look ! Don't you see ? ' With one hand he gripped me tightly by the shoulder, with the other he pointed to the *Mary Gleeson* anchored in mid-stream. ' Look ! *The yellow jack !* '

" I gazed with him across to the ship, and to my horrified astonishment saw the dreaded yellow flag, which denotes the presence of yellow fever, fluttering in the evening breeze. Shocked and alarmed, I asked myself who was the victim. There was no sickness among the ship's company when we went ashore. But I knew well enough the swiftness of death in these latitudes.

" ' Quick ! Get a *sampan !* ' ordered the captain.

" Privately, I doubted whether any boatman would venture into the tainted neighbourhood of a ship with yellow fever on board, and I was agreeably surprised to find that my only difficulty was to choose among the swarm that offered themselves. I could only conclude that they did not understand the meaning of the emblem. A moment or two later we were being propelled swiftly across the stream, our eyes fixed upon that fatal flag. The second officer stood at the top of the ladder to greet us as we climbed on board.

" ' All well, sir,' I heard him report in a perfectly normal voice.

" ' What ? ' ejaculated the captain, in astonishment, above me.

" ' All well, sir,' he repeated.

" By that time I had joined the captain on the deck, and we exchanged a puzzled glance. Then we looked around us. To our utter bewilderment, of the yellow jack there was no sign at all. There was not a rag of bunting about the ship.

" The captain bit his lip and wrinkled his brow. I could comprehend his perplexity. He turned sharply to the second officer.

" ' Svendsen, has anyone been monkeying with the signal-flags ? '

" ' No, sir.' The prompt denial was both surprised and emphatic. ' I have been on deck myself ever since you went ashore, sir,' added the old man, in justification of his certainty.

" ' H'm ! All right.' The captain shrugged his shoulders and turned to me. ' You saw it, didn't you ? ' he asked.

" ' Yes, sir,' I replied, confidently.

" ' A most extraordinary hallucination ! ' he said. ' But don't let it worry you. Come and have supper with me at six bells.'

" I could see plainly that he was much perturbed, and I myself felt very uneasy as I went below. Following upon the shock of the captain's narrow escape from the snake in the deserted temple, the strange trick of the conjurer at the *café*, and this hallucination, shared by both of us, of the most dreaded flag a sailor knows, combined to awake a primitive superstitious fear in me. My nerves were in a state of acute tension, and I found myself starting at the most ordinary sounds.

" The captain was normal and cheerful enough, however, when at seven o'clock I joined him in the beautiful saloon, which he had had fitted regardless of expense with everything that could minister to his comfort. It was his one luxury. The Chinese steward stood by the side of the elegantly-laid table, ready to serve his master. It was, as I said, the first time I had eaten with Captain Strong, and I was rather impressed with the refinement of his private tastes.

" The meal, an excellent one, passed without incident. My host was agreeably conversational, but his talk was confined to those impersonal subjects which he preferred. Not once did he refer to the happenings of the day, and I felt that it would be discretion on my part equally to refrain from mention of them. The silent-footed Chang-Fu cleared the table, pulled the awnings across the open, mosquito-netted skylight, switched on the electric lamps, and left us to our coffee and cigars.

" The centre table folded down so as to leave a clear space, which made the saloon appear larger than it really was, and we sat upon a comfortable leather-upholstered settee at one end, with our coffee on a little Chinese table between us.

" A tap on the door interrupted our talk, and Chang-Fu, the steward, glided into the saloon and made a respectful obeisance to the captain.

" ' Master—Chinee conjulor in *sampan* 'longside—want speak master. Him number one top-hole conjulor—makee plenty-heap big tlick—me talkee with him—him velly gleat conjulor.' The steward's wheedling voice had a note of genuine, awed admiration in it. ' Master see him ? ' he finished, insinuatingly, rubbing his hands together under his cringing, wrath-disarming smile.

" I glanced at the captain.

" ' I wonder if it is the fellow we saw at the *café*, sir ? ' I ventured, and then immediately regretted my words. Like the young fellow that I was, I was eager to see more of the skill of these Oriental magicians, but doubtless the captain would not wish again to come into contact with the man whose strange trick of converting the coin into a jewel had so perturbed him.

" Possibly he read my thoughts and resented the suspicion of moral cowardice. His tone was curt as he replied : —

" ' Very likely. Bring him down, Chang-Fu.'

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"BEHIND THE DENSE MASSES OF SMOKE I CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF THE CONJURER'S FACE, SMILING EVILLY, HIS EYES GLITTERING IN THE RED GLOW, HIS FINGER-TIPS SWEEPING ROUND AND ROUND IN THE FUMES."

"Once more the muscles stood out along his jaw and his face set doggedly. It was as though he prepared to confront an adversary. Fascinated by the mystery which I felt underlay all this, I thrilled with a sense of high adventure as I saw the captain go to a drawer in a locker and get out a heavy revolver, which he slipped into his coat-pocket. He returned to his seat by my side.

"A moment later Chang-Fu ushered in the conjurer, and discreetly vanished. It was indeed the man we had seen at the *café*; more than that, I recognized him suddenly, being now without his hat, as the man hanging round that deserted temple.

"He performed one or two clever but not particularly remarkable tricks, all of them harmless enough, and my vague suspicions of mischief were lulled gradually in the interest with which I watched him. Captain Strong remained silent, expressionless. I noticed that it was towards him that the conjurer directed his smiles, and his attention that he endeavoured more especially to hold. His complete immobility made it impossible to guess the effect of the conjurer's manœuvres; certainly he did not take his eyes from him for a single moment, and his right hand remained in the pocket where I knew the revolver to be.

"Presently the conjurer produced a large bronze bowl—apparently from nowhere—and made the usual mystic passes in the air above it. Smoke began to issue from the bowl, a thick dark smoke which filled the

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saloon with a pervasive and subtly pleasant aromatic scent. The smoke rose from the bowl in ever denser volumes, curling into the air under the saloon roof in such masses as to obscure our vision of the farther walls. The electric lamps glowed redly as through a fog. The sweet, cloying smell of incense permeated the atmosphere, made it oppressive, dulled the brain as I drew it with every breath into my lungs. An insidious paralysis stole over me. I felt that I had no power over my limbs, could not move a muscle. I could only stare fascinated at that grotesquely ugly Oriental half-seen in the dim light amid the wreathing fumes, his skeleton-like hands still sweeping in slow and regular passes over the bowl. I heard the deep breathing of Captain Strong at my side as of a person whose individuality was remote from me, hardly to be identified. My drugged brain registered only that he was as motionless as I.

"Suddenly the electric lights were extinguished—I did not see how, in that fog of smoke, but the magician must have had the switch explained to him by the steward. The darkness was only momentary. On the instant almost a dull red glow kindled itself in the depths of the bowl, illumined luridly the dense masses of smoke which still welled up from it. Behind them I caught a glimpse of the conjurer's face smiling evilly, inscrutably, his eyes glittering in the red glow, his finger-tips sweeping round and round in the fumes. Then—I missed the exact moment—he disappeared. A melancholy, sing-song chant commenced from somewhere, haunting the brain with its barbaric reiteration of meaningless words in a minor key. It was like the dreary lament of savage worshippers before an idol that remains obstinately mute, I remember thinking, vaguely, as I listened and watched with fascinated eyes that curling, red-tinted smoke rising from the hidden flame of the bowl, expecting I knew not what of marvellous appearance.

"Suddenly the smoke rolled away on either hand. I found myself looking down a vista—not at the darkened cabin-walls, but into the bright sunshine of the tropics—at a pagoda-like temple where two huge carved, staring figures guarded the entrance to an interior where lights glimmered. I recognized it with a peculiar thrill—the temple above Cho-lon!

"Not now was the courtyard deserted and overgrown with weeds. A throng of natives, gesticulating and chattering, though I could not hear them, filled it—pressed back on either side as though to make way for a procession. In that throng was a European in a white suit. He stood out conspicuous in the front rank of the Oriental crowd. What was there so familiar about that figure? My drugged brain puzzled vaguely for a moment or two—and then he turned his face towards me. *Captain Strong!*—a younger, slighter Captain Strong, but undoubtedly he. I saw the flash of his eyes under the heavy brows, the living man! My consciousness checked for a moment at this phenomenon of duplication, and then accepted it. It seemed another part of me that was listening to the deep breathing of the man at my side—I felt myself mingling with what I saw almost as with actual reality—let myself drift as in a dream, where the fantastic ceases to be strange.

"The procession filled the open space between the pressed-back ranks of the throng, a procession of priests with shaven heads and gorgeous robes, filing into the great doorway of the temple. After them came a group of young girls, singing evidently, dancing as they went, and flinging flowers on either hand—the young Annamite girls, who are so strikingly more attractive than their male relatives. I saw one of them throw a flower at the foot of the white-clad European—saw her provocative smile—saw him pick up the flower and fling it playfully back into her face—saw him follow the throng and press into the temple with the crowd. What was that peculiar gasp which came from the darkness at my side? A part of me groped with numbed faculties for its connection with the bright scene at which I gazed fascinated.

"The picture changed with the suddenness of a cinematograph film. I found myself staring at the great image of the Buddha, looming up above its prostrate worshippers from amid a blaze of torches. On its breast glowed and sparkled the sacred jewel—*the jewel into which the conjurer had transmuted Captain Strong's coin upon the marble-topped table of the café!*—the jewel suspended on a snake of gold.

"There, conspicuously erect, stood the white-clad figure among the worshippers, staring up fixedly at the serene immensity of the image. The jewel upon its breast glowed with a throbbing light like a living thing. There was a sudden commotion among the crowd. A group of priests came up to the white-clad man and pushed him gently but firmly out of the temple.

"Again the scene changed. It was night. The moon shone down upon a garden on a hillside. Far below, obliterated and revealed from instant to instant by the foliage moving in the breeze, glittered the clustered points of yellow light of a large town. In the shadow of the trees lurked a vague white figure. Towards it, across the moonlit open space, came another—a native girl. I could see her clearly. She was so daintily beautiful that I could not but suspect foreign blood in

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her. The best-looking Annamite girl I had seen was gross compared with her delicate charm. For all that, she was genuinely Oriental in type. Her lithe little figure, clad in a simple twisted robe, approached swiftly, her head turning from side to side in birdlike inquiry, peeping behind each bush she passed. It was not difficult to guess for whom she was looking. The white-clad figure stepped from its shadow, and in another moment she was in his arms.

"Then, with a sudden movement, she wriggled out of the impulsive embrace and prostrated herself quaintly in a humble little obeisance. The white-clad figure stooped to lift her up, folded her again in his arms. Their lips met in a long, passionate kiss. From the darkness at my side, but as it were from an immeasurable distance, came again the peculiar little gasp, a sound as of teeth clenching upon each other in the enormous silence which seemed not to be of this world.

"My attention was fixed upon the mysterious scene before me, so real that I forgot the ship's cabin and the conjurer with his volumes of smoke. The vision at which I gazed was to me actuality. What was happening? The man was speaking, gesticulating, pointing away with one hand—the girl was shrinking from him in horror, gesturing a desperate negative, and then letting herself be drawn tightly to his breast again to lavish her caresses upon him—and finally, as he still spoke with the same gesticulation, withdrawing herself once more, her hands up in agonized protest. What was being demanded of her? I held my breath as I watched the little drama. What was the



"AFTER THE PROCESSION OF PRIESTS CAME A GROUP OF YOUNG GIRLS, FLINGING FLOWERS ON EITHER HAND. I SAW ONE OF THEM THROW A FLOWER AT THE FOOT OF THE WHITE-CLAD EUROPEAN—SAW HER PROVOCATIVE SMILE—SAW HIM PICK UP THE FLOWER AND PLAYFULLY FLING IT BACK INTO HER FACE."

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request which was thus convulsing her to the bottom of her soul? Whatever it was, it was despairfully refused. In savage exasperation the man flung her from him to the ground, turned his back upon her, and strode away.



"She raised herself, stared after him crouchingly, agony in her face. She stretched out her arms to him, but he did not turn his head. Then, ceding evidently to an overwhelming impulse, she sprang to her feet, darted after him with the speed of a young deer, and flung both her arms passionately about his neck. Once more I saw him ask her the mysterious question, menace in his face. And now she surrendered, clinging to him desperately, tears coursing down her cheeks, her eyes wild, but every fibre of her obviously ready to do his bidding rather than lose him, as she nodded her head in frantic assent.

"Once more he spoke, pointing mysteriously across the garden. She drew away from him, her eyes fixed upon his face, her bosom filling as with the long, deep breath of some tragic resolve. He was inexorable. Hopelessly, she prepared to obey, in her attitude the touching dignity of fate accepted since love imposes it, eternal womanhood fulfilling itself in immolation. I felt the tears start to my eyes, although I could not imagine what was the evidently tremendous sacrifice demanded of her. The white-clad man stepped once more into the shadow of the bushes. With one last passionate, yearning look towards him, she moved away. She went crouched, huddled into herself like a woman who creeps forth to commit a crime.

"Again the scene changed. I was staring at the exterior of the temple in the moonlight. The two great figures by the portal gazed now over an empty courtyard. Only the moon-cast shadows of the trees moved upon its untenanted space. There was a moment of waiting—for I knew not what, but the air was filled with expectation. Then, slinking along the wall, scarcely visible, with halting, furtive step, I saw the girl emerge from the shadows. Like a ghost she seemed in the moonlight as she crept up to the giant figure by the portal, peered cautiously into the interior darkness, where two yellow flames glimmered. She slipped into the gloom like a pale shadow that flits across the wall.

"And then, I know not how, I found myself looking as from the doorway into the interior. Between two guttering torches the great image lifted itself up into a smoky obscurity, the glinting jewel still upon its breast—the jewel that was suspended by a flexible snake of reddish gold. With an impressive serenity the great calm face looked straight before it, its hands stretched out from the elbow above the legs, crossed

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tor its squatting, 'earth-touching' position. Below it, on the steps of the altar, a priest squatted also, his shaven head nodding forward in the sleep of a vigil excessively prolonged. By the portal stood the shrinking figure of the girl, staring in terror at the jewel winking in the uncertain light of the expiring torches.

"For a long, long moment she stood there, unable to move, her face looking as carven in its fixed immobility as the image itself. With a sympathetic thrill I realized the awful superstitious dread which had her in its grip. Then her human love triumphed. I saw her glide stealthily towards the giant figure, so stealthily that the nodding head of the somnolent priest altered not in the regularity of its drowsy rise and fall, so stealthily that she seemed but a part of the shifting shadows cast by the candelabra of the torches. Nimbly and cautiously she clambered from the altar-steps to the knee of the mighty image, drew herself up to the arm outstretched in benediction. She balanced herself precariously, rose suddenly upright upon it, and snatched at the jewel.

"The clasp of the flexible gold snake broke with the violence of her pull. I saw it slide like a little stream of ruddy fire into her hands, saw the last flash of the jewel as she stuffed it into her bosom. And then, with a start, the priest looked up.

"Ere he could do more than spring to his feet she had leaped down with the sure-footed agility of a mountain-girl. In a quick movement she evaded his clutch, was gone.

"Once more I found myself looking at the garden where the white-clad figure lurked in the shadows. A moment of waiting, then down the moonlit open space came the flitting figure of the girl. Swiftly she approached, panic in her wild flight, in the beautiful features now close enough for distinct view. She was sobbing as she ran. The man stepped out to her. She stopped, stood for a second regarding him with a look of inexpressible reproach, and then, averting her head, thrust into his eager grasp the sacred jewel. He slipped it into his pocket and caught her in his arms. She gazed at him in yearning doubt, her head drawn back, her soul seeming to question him through her eyes, and then suddenly she flung herself towards him, her bare arms round his neck, her mouth on his, kissing him in a passionate paroxysm of caresses. Desperately she yielded herself to him, frenziedly claiming the reward for her crime—his love. I saw



"SLOWLY SHE STRETCHED OUT HER ARMS IMPLORINGLY TO THE COMPANION AT MY SIDE."

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the tears rolling down her cheeks as she kissed him eagerly again and again, all else forgotten but absorption in his presence. In a thrill of apprehension I remembered the priest. Surely the alarm was given—a horde of fanatics searching for her while she lingered so recklessly! Despite the utter silence in which all this passed, I almost fancied I could hear the sonorous booming of a gong.

"My apprehension quickened to a stab of acute alarm. There, slinking towards them in the shadows, as stealthily as a cat, came a crouching figure, nearer and nearer from behind. The steel blade he clutched flashed in the moonlight. His face looked up, illumined in the soft radiance which suffused the garden. I recognized it—the priest who had slumbered at his post!—and then, with a curious little internal shock, but vaguely, as if these later incidents belonged to another existence, the full recognition dawned upon me—the wretched native who had loitered about the deserted pagoda of Cho-lon, the conjurer of the *café*, the conjurer who—ages since—had filled the saloon of the *Mary Gleeson* with smoke and incense from the red fire of a bronze bowl! His ugly face contorted with vindictive cunning, he crept now upon the oblivious lovers locked in their passionate embrace. I saw him gather himself for the spring, the long, murderous knife openly in his hand. In a spasm of horror all of me tried frantically to shriek a warning, but I could not utter a sound. I seemed to be only a watching brain, divorced from all the other organs of the body. He leaped.



"There was a glimmer of cold light as the knife descended. I waited, my heart stopping, in doubt as to the victim. The uncertainty lasted but an instant. The girl, struck in the back, turned her face up to the sky and crumpled to her knees like a marionette whose string is cut. For one long moment the grinning, evil face of the priest, tugging to release his knife, and the horrified eyes of the white man looked into each other in a silence which was appalling in its complete soundlessness. Then the white man struck savagely downwards upon the shaven head and sprang away into the darkness.

"Again I heard a gasp, a choked-back cry, from the obscurity at the side of me. But now it seemed to be startlingly nearer, and

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as my bewildered faculties tried to apprehend it, to identify the source which I knew vaguely must be familiar to me and yet could not bring to consciousness, my attention wandered for a moment. When I looked again the vision had disappeared. There was no longer garden or temple. There was only redly-illumined smoke rolling upward from a dull red glow and an atmosphere of sweet, sickly fumes that held my body in a drugged paralysis.

"Still I gazed, fascinated. Those thick, wreathing masses of smoke were shaping themselves—shaping themselves into something—something columnar. I watched like one in a dream, and as I watched a part of me attained to consciousness of Captain Strong sitting in frozen immobility by the side of me. The wreathing smoke coalesced, formed itself into something whose outlines were not yet clear. A brighter, yellower light emanated from below it, lit it up. A body—a vague female body—collected itself, and then a girl's head, strangely beautiful for all its almond eyes and scanty brows, smiled upon us, suddenly vivid and real. I recognized it with a shock—the girl of the garden! She and her body were now one complete living organism that moved sinuously from the hips. I held my breath in awe. Whereas the visions I had been watching were like pictures at a distance, this was an actual living woman a few feet from us. The smoke disappeared. I was staring at a beautiful native woman, as real as you or I, mysteriously illumined in yellow light against a background of obscurity, who stood where the fumes had writhed upwards from the bowl.

"Conscious as I now was of Captain Strong's close neighbourhood, I craved to turn to him for astonished comment. But still my body was deprived of function; I could not move a muscle. He made neither move nor sound. Then I almost forgot him in the fascinated interest which this apparition compelled.

"Swaying slightly, with a free, graceful motion of the hips, she moved from her place. Her mouth parted in a pathetic little smile of melancholy, her dark eyes gazing, not at me, but at something at my side, in soulful, yearning appeal, she glided towards us through a hushed silence where I could hear my own heart beat. Slowly she detached her arms from the simple robe which swathed her, stretched them out imploringly, with a wistful smile that seemed to beseech a difficult confidence, to the companion at my side, to Captain Strong. Once more I heard the gasp of his laboured breathing.

"She approached, and it seemed to me that she and I and the panting figure at my side whom I could not turn my head to see were the only things existing in a world that was otherwise dark. She was illumined from head to foot, clearly and definitely detached from her surroundings. I marked the soft, lithe roundness of her form. Did she speak? Her lips moved, but I heard nothing, although it seemed to me that a gently-uttered name echoed far away in illimitable space, echoed endlessly as though ringing through the vast, incommensurable soul of things past, present, and to be.

"A name was breathed distinctly, as in awed answer, from the obscurity at my side. 'Héa-Nan! Héa-Nan!' The wistful smile on the beautiful face sweetened as in grateful recognition. The eyes softened in a tender fondness that had nevertheless a strange, remote dignity. Not now did she give herself up to the passionate abandonment of that moonlit garden. Love still yearned from her, but it was the eternal love of the soul that looks to the unimaginable realities beyond the body.

"Slowly, slowly she approached, until it seemed that the hands of her outstretched arms would brush my sleeve as they reached towards the man I felt recoil back into the darkness at my side. I looked up into the face of a living, breathing woman—saw the faint flush upon her Asiatic complexion—saw the dark eyes glowing, swimming in a bath of tears. Once more the lips moved silently—once more the answering name—'Héa-Nan!'—came in an emotionally exhaled whisper from the man who could draw back no farther.

"She smiled, a smile of radiant forgiveness, of understanding, and—so it seemed—of pity, and then I saw her arms make a quick movement. From the shadow at my side she plucked something, held it aloft. The sacred jewel of the Buddha blazed in the mouth of the reddish-gold snake that seemed to curl alive about her arm. For one long moment I looked up at her, her face glowing strangely in the glory of the recovered jewel, yet still a living, human woman, with lips that parted as I watched—and then I found myself staring into a smother of smoke, from which issued a ghastly, mocking laughter.

"The red glow near the floor expired in one last flicker. There was a stab of flame, the simultaneous deafeningly-violent detonation of a revolver fired close to my ear, a savage cry of furious menace, another gloating chuckle of laughter—and then darkness and silence.

"Brought suddenly to myself, I struggled to my feet in the choking fumes and groped feverishly for the switch of the electric light. I found it, and the lamps sprang into dull illumination of the smoke-filled cabin. The door was open. The conjurer had disappeared—I heard a splash in the river

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under the open ports, and was left no doubt that he was beyond our reach. Then, in sudden alarm at his silence, I turned to look for Captain Strong.

"He was stretched back unconscious upon the settee where we had sat together, his hand still grasping the revolver, which he had vainly fired with his last strength. He looked livid, pale as death, and for a moment I thought the native had murdered him. But I could find no mark on him, and presently he opened his eyes, began to murmur delirious phrases. I saw at a glance that he was very ill, with the illness that frightens you when you see it in a place like Saigon. With some difficulty, for he was a heavy man, I lifted him to his bunk and put him to bed. As I loosened the shirt from about his throat I noticed, with a thrill of the uncanny which made me shudder, that round his neck was a circling line of blanched skin, and on his chest a similar, broader patch. But the amulet whose long wearing had evidently caused these marks had disappeared completely.

"Half an hour later I was being rowed in all haste to the black Messageries Maritimes boat moored in the river, and claiming the services of her doctor.

"It was hopeless from the first, and we both knew it. Captain Strong died before morning, raving native words in his delirium and calling incessantly a native name—'Héa-Nan! Héa-Nan!'

"At dawn I looked up to see the yellow jack fluttering from the masthead precisely as, not twelve hours before, I had seen the vision of it from the quay."

Captain Williamson stopped, glanced at his burnt-out cheroot, threw it away, and selected another one carefully from his case.

"Well, professor, what do you make of that?" he asked, as he struck a match.

The professor assumed an air of wisdom superior to any mystery.

"Of course" he said, "there is no doubt what happened. Captain Strong was probably infected with yellow fever coming up the river. Years before, he had instigated a native girl to rob that Buddhist temple on his behalf, and finding himself back at the place he was impelled—it is a common psychological phenomenon in criminals—to revisit the scene of his crime. The ex-priest saw him and recognized him, and, wishing to make quite sure whether he still possessed the sacred jewel, he hypnotized him by chaining his conscious attention on his little conjuring trick at the *café*, and then suggested to him the vision of the jewel by outlining it with his subject's finger on the table. Captain Strong's exclamation and his gesture would be sufficient evidence that he still wore it.

"As for the scene in the saloon, it was hypnotism on a large scale, induced by the use of the drugs with which the atmosphere was filled. Captain Strong's subconscious mind came to the top and lived once again through the episodes of the robbery and the death of his agent, seeing them, as is the habit of the subjective mind when released from the control of the objective surface consciousness, like actual present facts. The hallucination of the girl as a living presence in the cabin is, of course, explained by the silent suggestion of the priest acting on the already highly-excited subconsciousness of the guilty man. Just as I can make a hypnotic patient believe that you are someone else and see you as someone else, so the conjurer himself, under cover of the vision he had suggested, approached the wearer of the sacred jewel and snatched it from his neck. The emotional crisis undergone by Captain Strong would, of course, hasten the onset of the yellow fever already in his body."

"H'm!" objected Captain Williamson, "but that doesn't explain why I should share these visions."

The professor was nothing daunted.

"Of course," he said, "you were in close propinquity to Captain Strong, and were doubtless what is known as *en rapport* with him. The vision of the yellow flag—the not uncommon hallucination of a death-symbol, produced by the subconsciousness of a doomed person—was communicated to you when the captain gripped your shoulder——"

"Have a whisky-and-soda, professor," interrupted the planter, coarsely, "and don't spoil a good story."

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The BOOM IN HUNTING

A NOTE FOR NOVICES

Written and Illustrated by
G·D·ARMOUR



THERE is a story told of a lady in America who, in conversation with a hunting man from England, said: "I can't understand how you can do much fox-hunting in England. I suppose you just chase the poor little animal round and round the island till you catch him!"

The American idea of fox-hunting is often rather quaint, and I can remember another case, an experience of my own, illustrating this. A young man from somewhere in the North of America, or it may be Canada — whose ideas and language somewhat savoured of what one connects with the old Hudson Bay fur trading — in all seriousness asked me one day when out with a pack of hounds to which I was acting as whip, 'Say, when you catch the fox what do you do with the pelt?" Later in the day he witnessed to what "tatters of brown" a pack of foxhounds reduced the said pelt. On another occasion the same youth, looking on at our attempts to bolt a fox we had run to ground, asked, "Shall I give him a shot if he comes out?" and seemed rather surprised that he should not be permitted to use the 'shooting-iron" which he evidently had secreted somewhere on his person.

It is a kind of tradition that foxhounds are kept for the purpose of keeping down foxes. This may have been their original object, but I think there is little doubt that, but for their existence in modern times, the fox in this country would soon be extinct.

The lady who wondered how they hunted in our "tight little island" would be surprised to know that there are in round figures something like five hundred packs of hounds of different kinds kept for hunting in Britain, of which upwards of two hundred chase the fox "round and round the islands."

Some of these packs have been in existence more than two hundred years; that is to say, there are records of them as established packs for that time, though no doubt the origin of some is of much earlier date.

That hunting is the oldest of "sports" is an obvious fact which need not be dwelt upon. That it no doubt originated in the necessity of killing wild animals for food makes little difference. No doubt the



THE PREHISTORIC HUNTING MAN.

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sporting element was discovered as early as the Stone Age, and men of that time followed the chase for love of it, as well as for food.

The hunting instinct is inherent in all carnivorous animals, from man downwards, and always will be as long as the world lasts.

When following the chase on horseback began no one knows, but it must have been very shortly after the discovery of the horse as a means of transport. The first horseman, I expect, had an exciting time, and I have no doubt supplied as much amusement to his friends as the modern tyro who essays the equestrian art for the first time.

Somehow the back of a horse is always an excellent stage from which to display the humours of incompetence.

I once heard of a middle-aged Jew who, for some reason, had to learn to ride. He was accordingly mounted upon a very placid and suitable animal. After sitting in the saddle for some time and having gained sufficient confidence, he addressed the animal in a mild and conciliatory tone and said, "Now commence—commence!"

So far as one can see, hunting in some places at least is rather "booming" after the war, and many Jews and Gentiles not "born in the saddle" are taking to it.

Many people have made money during the war—some may be "profiteers"—and a number of all these are no doubt going to form a proportion of the "field" of the future, in fact, do so now, especially in what are known as the "Home Counties." Some of them may be counted upon to supply a humorous element, to begin with at least, until they learn the technicalities and traditions of the hunting-field. Even if he can sit upon a horse reasonably well, the man who has never seen beans except on the dinner-table cannot be expected to recognize that most easily-damaged crop, and respect it, when showing only a couple of little green leaves above the ground, and he will be in much the same position if warned to "'Ware wheat" as Phil May's Cockney in *Punch*, who replied, "Why, it's only mud!"



THE HUNTING MAN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

The uninitiated can hardly be expected to know that the huntsman's or whip's "'Ware 'oss!" is not so much addressed to a hound to warn him to get out of the way of a horse, as to the rider of the animal himself.

In the hunting-field there are many little opportunities of unenviable distinction, like the opening of a gate, should the novice chance to find himself in the front of an impatient crowd at such an obstruction. If he takes the wrong hand to it and "foozles," he will, in all probability, be told with great frankness what is thought of him and where he ought to be.

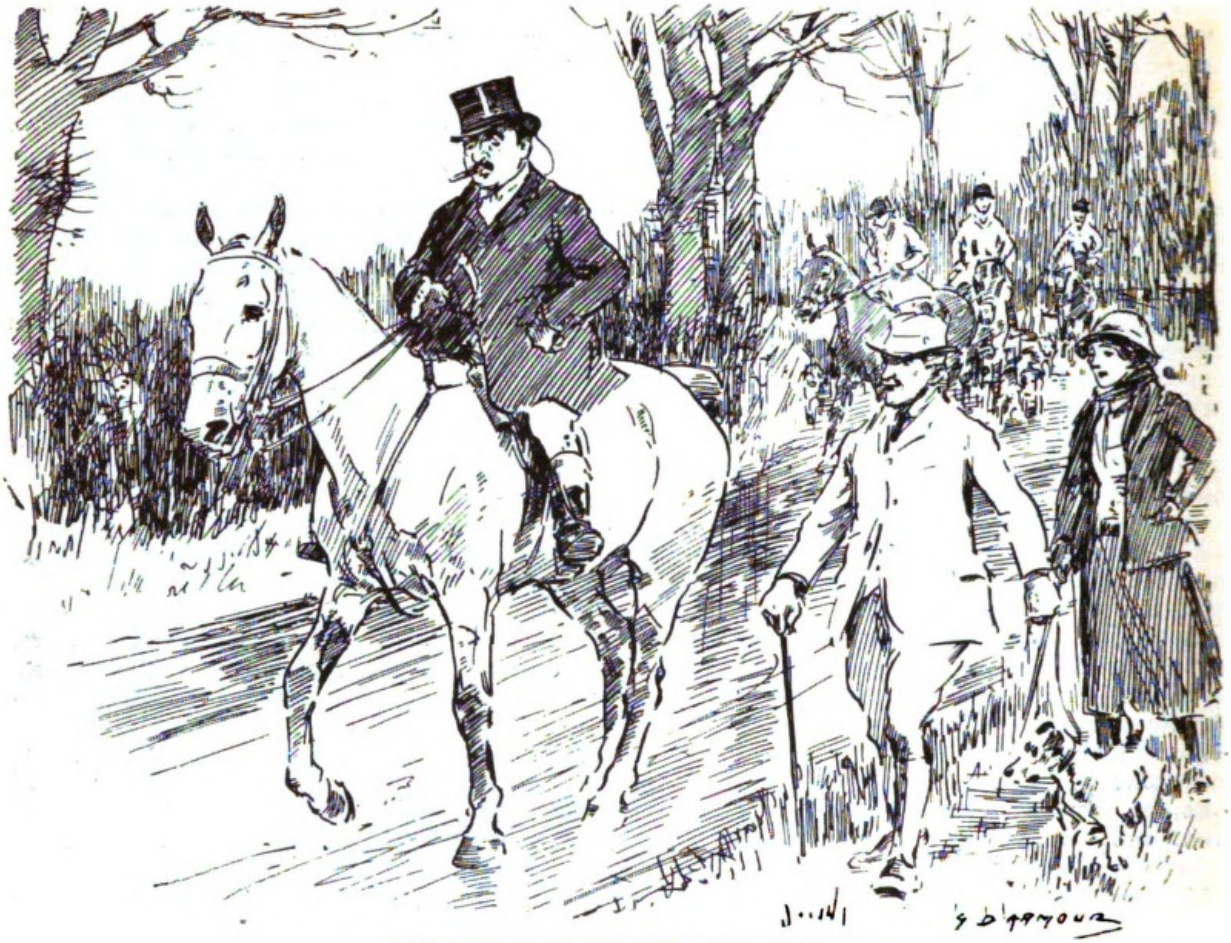
Many fields are full at present of young soldiers—"Soldier hofficers," as Jorrocks used to call them; they are seldom millionaires, and some of them frankly state that they are "blewing" their gratuity, and intend to have a good time while it lasts. From what I know of them, I don't think there is anyone more capable of getting value for their money in this way.

Some of them may possibly have only learned the noble art of horsemanship during the war, but youth is adaptive, and bar a few well-known characteristics of not fully-informed sportsmen, such as pressing upon the hounds before they have settled properly to a line, or at a check, they can be counted upon to pick up a working knowledge of the sport pretty rapidly.

All these new people will not tend to make the life of the M.F.H. any more a bed of roses than heretofore. A master has need of many qualities to cope with the various situations which from time to time arise, and the ideal master is a *rara avis* who would go far in most walks of life. Their methods vary enormously, from the plentiful use of strong language to the gentle satire which is often quite as effective.

There is an old tale told of a sportsman who, having taken up the sport of hunting

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THE NEW RICH AND THE NEW POOR.

somewhat late in life, found himself, in the very first hunt he had selected, come under the critical eye of the master in connection with some unconscious impropriety. He received such a "telling off" that he removed to another country, only to have the bad fortune to again fall into the bad grace and under the rough tongue of its master, who was widely celebrated for his language. Our unfortunate tyro again removed, this time leaving the fashionable countries, and trying a more provincial one in search of peace. Again bad luck pursued him, and the provincial master tried to tell him in his most forcible language what he thought of him, until the unfortunate worm turned and stopped him with the remark, "It's no use your trying to do that; I've been cursed by Blank in Leicestershire, I've been cursed by Blankety-Blank in Ireland, and anything you can do doesn't sound more than the mere humming of a bee compared to them."

It would be difficult to say what is the most effective kind of master, but I have always been strongly of opinion that a great deal depended on *where* the master was. Some seem to have the faculty of always being in the right place at the critical moment, and exercise a moral effect far greater than the man whose voice is heard shouting from behind. It is so easy *not* to hear.

In dealing with all questions connected with hunting, the secretary and treasurer, and nowadays the "cap" collector—generally voluntary workers—cannot be forgotten; in fact, there is little danger of their allowing themselves to be. Sound finance is a part of all successful undertakings, and with the cost of everything so increased, the work of these gentlemen is by no means a sinecure.

During five years of war "carrying on" has taxed the utmost efforts of the few sportsmen who, debarred for one reason or another from serving abroad, devoted what time war work at home allowed to keeping going the sport they loved. To them, all who hunt owe more than they will ever be able to repay. Among others, some retired hunt servants once more donned the old pink and again mounted saddles they had long relinquished to the younger generation, often occupying much subordinate positions to what they had held, but helping to carry on the good work and keep things going, so that the dreams of the trenches of "a good hunt when it is all over" could come true for the sportsman who had the good fortune to "come through."

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Hunt servants are very much a class by themselves, the profession running in families often for many generations, and those who rise to be huntsmen are very often men of considerable character, their life generally developing it as time goes on.

The uninitiated can hardly realize what goes to the making of a successful huntsman. Courage, determination, initiative, and rapidity of thought are a few of the many requisites. Added to them you often find many graces as well; associating with all classes widens their outlook on humanity. And the necessity for observation, knowledge of character, and often a considerable deal of diplomacy, makes the best of them good-mannered and ready-witted. The Duke of Beaufort's late huntsman, Will Dale, was an example of a man beloved by everyone who knew him, who, without ever trying to be anything more than a huntsman, was one of Nature's gentlemen. He always had a ready answer for peer or peasant, often strongly tinged with humour. I remember a somewhat excited stranger galloping up to him in that stronghold for foxes, Great-wood, to say that the fox had gone away at the bottom of the cover, to which Will replied: "Thanks, sir; but I think the main body's up at the top." In his own country I suppose there were few huntsmen of whom more stories were told than old Will Shore, who died a few years ago, and who hunted the Duke of Buccleuch's hounds in Scotland for a great number of years. His wit was of the very driest description, so much so indeed that one could recognize a tale told in that country as one of Will's from that quality alone. I have forgotten many, but one remark comes to mind made to a young gentleman who was riding a well-known and very ancient hireling. The rider, after more or less getting among the hounds at a meet, said to Shore, "Confound this brute; he won't keep still for a moment." Will's reply was, "Give him a little time, Mr. William, give him a little time, and he'll be still long enough."

It is sincerely hoped that the present "boom" may continue, but as there have been many dangers successfully weathered, there are others which may be serious in the future.

The hunting-field has lost many staunch friends who possibly were not much in the limelight, the smaller men who just managed in time past to keep one or two horses and hunt in a quiet way, but whom changed times, increased costs, and often diminished incomes have reduced to "Shanks's mare." These generally lived in the country all the year round, were of it, and were really more



"MANY FIELDS ARE FULL AT PRESENT OF YOUNG SOLDIERS BLEWING THEIR GRATUITY."

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FARMER: "WHEAT BE BLOWED! IT'S MY OWN, AND NOWT DOES IT MORE GOOD IN DRY WEATHER THAN A GOOD RIDIN' OVER!"

used to it than the bigger man who possibly hunted more and kept more horses, but was away the rest of the year and really did not know neighbouring farmers over whose land he rode, or understood much of the small matters which go to make up country life and the success of a hunt as a part of it. Will the new recruits make up for their loss? Time only will show.

One good sign is that farmers are on the increase in the field, an increase that is earnestly to be desired. Farmers, taken all round, have always been the friends of hunting, but in the lean times had little chance to indulge in it. Now that times are better, if the labour difficulties were overcome, we may hopefully look to see more farmers and their sons hunting.

Farmers provide the land, the first necessity, but unfortunately it is seldom that they can provide the money necessary to carry on hunting. This, in the case of some of the old family packs, was provided from the private purse of the head of that family. The prospect of this continuing in even the few cases surviving is small—the breaking up of large estates will affect hunting as much as or more than anything else.

The new recruits to hunting should keep it in mind that the sport has always been carried on greatly by the rich paying for what the poorer could not, and, if hunting is to continue, he who can afford it must pay cheerfully for more than what he considers his share.

Hunt committees may issue a list of minimum subscriptions accepted, but this must not be taken—as often in the case of controlled prices—as the maximum also.

If I may advise the beginner who is genuinely keen, his best place is not the Shires, but some smaller country, where they will welcome him and his subscription, and where he will often get much more for his money, as his money will do more for the hunt, and more sport than among what Jorrocks called the "top-sawyers" in the Midlands.

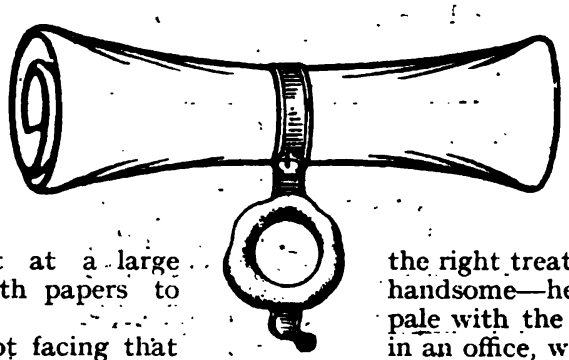
Let him remember, wherever he is, that hunting is, and should be, a democratic sport, and the more so it is the longer it will live. Soldier, sailor, tinker, tailor, can come out hunting. No class distinctions debar from the hunting-field, and probably the tailor whom the master reproved for riding up a furrow in a wheat-field and who replied that he was only "riding up the seam" was as real a sportsman as his "best subscriber."

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CAZALET'S SECRETARY

By Mrs Baillie Reynolds

ILLUSTRATED BY E.G. OAKDALE



THE sound of a deliberate footstep was heard ascending the zinc-edged treads of the public stair. It caused the young woman who sat at a large writing-table strewn with papers to raise her head.

As she sat she was not facing that door, but sideways to it; and she did not turn her head as the owner of the footstep entered, but bent it over the letter on her blotting-pad, saying quietly, "Good morning."

"Good morning, Miss Western," was the frigid rejoinder.

The man who closed the door and crossed the room was still youngish, and suggested, by some effect of his smooth-shaven face and careful morning dress, a statesman or member of Parliament. His hair was dark, and was beginning to recede from his forehead. His lips were thin and his expression cold.

His own table stood nearer the fire—a desk-table, perfectly clean, well polished, and tidy. Upon its blotting-pad lay two piles of letters, each held down by a weight, and each with some kind of note pencilled in blue on its upper corner, showing that his secretary had been through them before him.

Mr. Cazalet took up the papers, stared at them vaguely, selected one, and seemed to read it—Miss Western felt sure that he only seemed to read it. In the atmosphere there was a tensity, an embarrassment, a consciousness . . .

She felt that if the bursting of the storm were much longer delayed, she must begin to giggle hysterically.

She was a tall, elegant woman, not much under thirty, and her business attire was purposely plain and severe. Her abundant hair, bronze-brown, was too tightly coiled. One felt that, with the right treatment, she would be very handsome—her complexion, though pale with the pallor of one who lives in an office, was of fine texture, almost faultless. Her expression was resolute, and the corners of her mouth set almost grimly.

Cazalet cleared his throat. It was coming! She felt absurdly impelled to grip the arms of her seat, as though it had been a dentist's chair.

"It seems—er—to me, Miss Western, that we must come to an understanding respecting—respecting—the subject—I should say, respecting your attitude——"

She interrupted him, but quietly enough: "Respecting what took place yesterday?"

"Ah! Precisely."

He moved to the hearthrug—that tribunal of the Englishman's Home—and stood before the excellent fire judicially. "I was too much annoyed, last night, to realize fully the extent to which I disapproved of what you had done—or said——"

"Both!"

The second interruption seemed to disconcert him. He adjusted his pince-nez and stared at her fixedly. "I—came to certain conclusions," he said, almost defiantly, as one determined to have his say, "though I own that your—your—the position you may take up this morning, might do much to modify them."

"What conclusions, Mr. Cazalet?"

"After studying the situation in all its

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bearings, I decided that if you adhere to last night's attitude—*if*, I say—I can no longer retain your services."

It was out. Philippa did not even look up.

"I expected it," she replied, evenly. "Am I to count my notice from to-day?"

He was now quite evidently taken aback. He had launched his thunderbolt only to find it foreseen—discounted. For this, it seemed, he was unprepared. But, since she made no attempt to challenge his decision, he began, unreasonably, to defend it.

"My secretary must be at my orders—accept my decisions—defer to my judgment. That one in your position should take upon herself to refuse, in my name, an invitation I had not so much as seen—and should then proceed to justify her action in terms I can only describe as offensive—branding me as a traitor to my country because I wish to attend a meeting of excellent persons, all bent upon the laudable aim of showing kindness to our late enemies—this, I repeat, to my mind constitutes an attitude which I cannot condone."

"The critic on the hearth, in fact! I quite see. It does not do."

"Do? I should think not. The freedom of language which you permitted yourself yesterday—why, I would not allow my best friend to speak so to me!"

"No, I fear you wouldn't. That is the pity of it."

He surveyed her with a bewildered mien. "You, too," he suggested, presently—and, whether he knew it or not, his voice was a plea—"have had time for cool reflection. It is possible that you have come to view your probably well-meant interference in another light? If so, you will find me ready"—he broke off, for she had shaken her head—quietly, but quite unmistakably.

"You say No! I am to gather that you feel no regret for the line you adopted?"

She rose to her feet. "I did not speak in the heat of anger. I thought well before I spoke. I cannot withdraw a word."

"Nor apologize?"

"No. Unless it be an apology to say I am sorry I was forced to hurt your feelings. I am aware I behaved more as your friend than as your paid automaton. I wanted to save you—to hold you back from a morass, in which you are allowing yourself to flounder. Look there!" She pointed to the heap of letters on his desk. "Examine those! They all came this morning! See who the writers are! Foreign Jews, creeping traitors, wild cranks, headlong faddists, and fanatics! Nice company for you! They think they have you won over! And you ask me to say I regret doing my feeble bit to hold you back!"

"That will do, thank you, Miss Western."

"Agreed, Mr. Cazalet. I leave you this day week, and——"

"This day *week!* Surely not so soon! How am I to replace you in a week?"

Philippa shrugged her shoulders. "That is your affair. My engagement is by the week. I suggest you write and ask one of your new friends—say Sir Lazarus Lopez—to help you. He could easily provide you with someone who would never be tempted to criticize your flirtations with treason."

"Miss Western, you forget yourself."

"I fear that is so. But I remember my country."

He bit his lip and turned to the mass of correspondence before him.

"We had better begin our work."

For more than an hour they worked There was a longish pause before he took up and examined the letter from the great Sir Lazarus, which lay on the top of the second pile.

"Dear Sir Lazarus," said he at last.

Philippa raised her head. In each smooth cheek there burned a rose the member of Parliament had never seen there. "I beg your pardon—have you read, not merely Sir Lazarus's letter, but the document he encloses?"

Cazalet swallowed hard.

"That is not your affair——"

"Forgive me, I must contradict you. I ought to warn you that I may think it my duty to inform the Government, should what you write be, in my judgment, dangerous to the State."

He sprang to his feet. "My confidential secretary!" he thundered.

"Yes. Nothing can be stronger than your claim upon my silence, except my country's claim upon my speech."

He strode up and down the room, and something like an oath came from between his compressed lips.

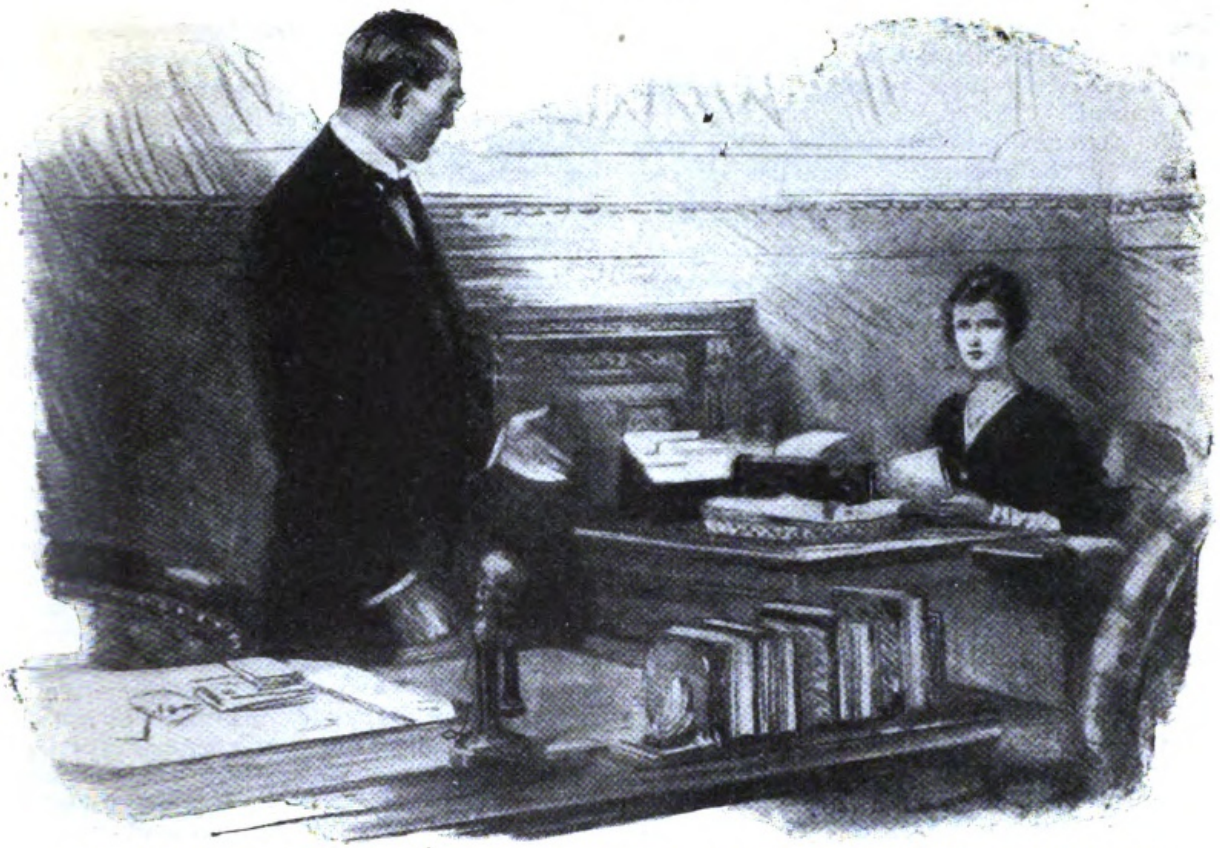
"Perhaps," she suggested, "I had better leave at once—without notice? How can we go on working together as things are now?"

He burst out, bringing down a clenched hand upon his desk.

"This is preposterous! Incredible! I fully expected to find you reasonable this morning! You always have been eminently reasonable! People have asked me if I don't find a lady secretary taking offence at trifles, shedding tears if corrected—and I have laughed at them! I have found you a model of punctuality, decorum, silence."

"So that, now the Lord has opened the mouth of the ass, you are very naturally both annoyed and surprised. Let me make a suggestion. There are just three letters there which you must answer yourself, not letting me see what you write. I can manage all the rest."

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"HE BURST OUT: 'THIS IS PREPOSTEROUS! INCREDIBLE! I FULLY EXPECTED TO FIND YOU REASONABLE.'"

He looked at her darkly; then, with a quick sigh of relief, dropped into his chair.

"Very well, take this."

It was all finished at last, and Miss Western retired to her typewriter in the back office to transcribe; while her chief took his unwilling pen and scribbled two untidy notes and a letter of some length.

Presently Philippa came back, holding in her hand some small compact pages of typed matter, fastened neatly together. She laid them on his desk. "Notes for the Henwood Heath meeting," said she, "with special view to the agricultural heckler. I went over there last Saturday and collected one or two little facts which ought to help you."

As he took up the notes he lifted his eyes to her face almost beseechingly. "You went down there—on your one free day—to supply me with data?" His eye ran over the terse, pithy phrases. "Jove, that ought to settle them! Very good—good indeed! You can rely upon this information?"

"It rests on the carefully-sifted evidence of natives. See this, about the rearing of calves, and oil-cake. You know how they harp upon the cost of feeding. I took the trouble to find out exactly how much oil-cake went into the district in the course of last year. Two hundredweight—among eighty or ninety farmers! That ought to pulverize them!"

His set lips relaxed into a smile, quickly chased by a worried frown. "What on earth am I going to do without you?"

She turned away. "Oh, there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out!"

He grew a little red and fumbled with his blotting-pad.

"Couldn't we—how would it be to go on—to try to do as we have done this morning—leaving me to attend to this correspondence which you object to?"

She turned, in great surprise.

"You mean—you withdraw your notice?"

He reddened, not looking up. But he nodded.

"I'm sorry. But I can't. I must go. I won't be a party to what is going on. In a day or two more you will be helplessly committed. I've shot my bolt, and vainly. I can't stay on and see the results."

'Well," he said, angrily, fingering the papers he held, "I never should have thought you would be so ready to go."

She laughed bitterly. "You think a woman throws away her daily bread lightly?"

"Daily bread?" he echoed, incredulously.

"And that's not the worst," she went on, hurriedly. "This is the work I like—the work I can do well—this great game of government! Yet you think I go willingly. Well, it just shows what strangers we are,

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that's all! But look at the time! Your appointment in Carlton House Terrace is at twelve-thirty. I must telephone for a taxi this instant."

She hastened into the smaller office and picked up the receiver. "You'll stay the week, at least?" he pleaded.

"Yes, I'll stay the week."

He picked up hat and stick. "Then good-bye till to-morrow morning. We meet about eleven, I suppose? You know I go down to Hampshire this afternoon?"

"Yes. Everything you want for the meeting is there, I think, in that attaché-case. The taxi will be at the door by the time you get downstairs."

She set down the telephone, but remained in the back room, and after a minute's hesitation he went out. But, before he closed the door, her voice recalled him.

She was standing in the archway between the two rooms, and she looked nervous. She pointed to his writing-table. "Have you put those letters which came this morning in there?"

"I have. Under lock and key," he replied, stiffly.

"Then don't. Don't leave them here. An office is easily searched. There are so many hours when we are neither of us here——"

He turned crimson.

"*Searched?* What do you mean?"

"Nothing definite—only to be on the safe side. Remember—you took me out of the Secret Service branch of the Department: and I saw one of our own men, whose face I know, watching this office yesterday. It is of course possible that he was after somebody else—but he eyed me closely as I went out. It is my belief that you were followed when you went to see Sir Lazarus two days ago——"

He made a sound of inarticulate rage. "Are you suggesting that the Department views me—*me*—with suspicion?"

She replied flatly, "Yes. That is what I am suggesting."

"Such an idea is as preposterous as it is offensive," was his furious retort, as he turned on his heel and left her.

The offices were on the second floor of a small house in Ashill Place, Westminster. The larger room faced the street. Before each of its long windows was hung a plain width of mosquito muslin, which by no means obstructed one's view of the outer world, while making it impossible for anyone in the street to see within, unless there were a light in the room.

Directly Cazalet had gone downstairs, Philippa stole as near the window as she could stand without being seen from outside. She looked up the road and down, and scrutinized the driver of the taxi which carried him away. Nobody was on the pavement very near the house; but a man who had been leaning on the railings, farther on, straightened himself, began to move briskly in the same direction as the taxi, turned the corner at which it disappeared, and passed from sight.

"When I am a woman of leisure," Miss Western told herself, "I am going to write a striking essay on male vanity. Nobody yet has ever plumbed its depths. But when secrets come to be disclosed, we shall find out that half the treachery in the world has been achieved by flattering a young man's vanity. We have been searching all the papers, they tell him, listening on every platform—to find a man who can speak as you can—a mind which is open to reason—a Great Intellect, in short, which ought to influence the world! That is the way to snare them! And exactly the way to snare Norman Cazalet. They are just fooling him to the top of his bent; and the Department has got wind of it, and means to catch him out. Don't I know Bull-Manning's methods, of old? Those loathsome letters and that poisonous piece of propaganda are here, in this table drawer; and if copies of them reach the hands of the Chief, he's finished. Nothing will be said. It will only just be arranged that he ceases to rise, that he gets no job, that no seat will be found for him next election. Oh, the pity of it!"

She sat down wearily to complete the morning's work, usually so delightful to her. Just as she was thinking of going out to lunch, a tap came at the door, and in reply to her summons a man entered with a straw bag of tools over his shoulder.

"Beg pardon, miss—come about the electric light."

Philippa remembered with a start that she had telephoned a couple of days before for a mechanic to put new cord upon her carrying lamp. She scanned the workman with eyes like searchlights. He had all the air of being what he professed to be. But she knew that Bull-Manning used the tapping of the telephone as one of his best methods.

"Come in," said she, slowly; "I shall be glad to have that job done, for the days close in so quickly now, I have to use a light at four o'clock."

"I'll have it ready long before that, miss." He swung down his basket, and set about his work in a businesslike way. His finger-nails were black and broken, he appeared to be no more and no less than the workman for whom she had sent. But her mind, keenly careful for Cazalet, was working swiftly, and she determined to make sure.

She pinned on her hat, slipped into her

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long coat, and took up her bag, containing all the letters for post. It would be quite easy for her to catch this man in the act if he had come to spy. Half her intelligence rejected the idea. But she could not forget the face of Paine, the Secret Service man whom she had yesterday seen so near.

If her suspicions were just, then this affair into which Cazalet was drifting so easily—this sinister combination of Sir Lazarus Lopez with certain great continental and transatlantic firms—must be far more serious than she had any idea of. Cazalet was among the most able—perhaps the most able—of Bull-Manning's young men. That he had been approached by this gang was certainly known to the Chief. It was likely enough that his weak point—his personal vanity—was likewise known to the astute statesman.

She went calmly out, telling the man, if he should have got through his job before her return, to shut the office door after him.

Passing into the street, with a heart thumping uncomfortably, she immediately crossed, in such a way as to be clearly in sight of anyone who might be observing her progress from the window. She walked on purposefully, turning out of sight at the corner, and coming into Victoria Street. At the first pillar-box she paused, and posted her large mail, searching her bag as if to be sure that she put in all she had; but nevertheless retaining the three letters which Cazalet himself had written. If there was anything in her forebodings, she knew she would have been followed to the post; but had no reason to suppose that she would be shadowed farther. However, she determined to take adequate precaution, so walked into an A.B.C. shop opposite, and, having purchased some buns, passed out again at once by the side entrance. Thence, by turning all corners in the same direction, she worked herself back into Ashill Place, on the same side of the way as Number Nine, where the offices were. She kept close to the area railings, so that she could not be seen to approach except by someone standing right in the window. At the corner of the road she stopped a policeman.

"I am just going back to my office, at Number Nine," said she. "I left a man there, repairing my electric light. I felt a little doubtful of him, and as there are things in the office worth stealing, I am going back considerably sooner than he expects me. If I find him doing anything he ought not, I shall ring a bell twice. Will you come and stand at the entrance while I go upstairs?"

Miss Western's dignified and straightforward manner caused the policeman to give heed. At that time, the dislocation and unemployment which followed unavoidably upon the close of war were causing a good deal of burglary.

"Sure he'll let you get at the bell—supposing he's what you think he is?" he asked.

"He can't prevent me, because the bell's on the landing. I have a way in which I can see what he is doing without going into the room. I expect I am making a fuss about nothing; but I shall feel more comfortable if you will do as I ask you."

He accompanied her to the open street door, and she crept upstairs with noiseless tread.

Some previous tenants of the premises had fitted a letter-box to the door of the front office—a door little used by Cazalet, whose visitors all entered through the back room, on which occasions a curtain was drawn to screen off his own domain.

The letter-box was of brass wire netting, so that anyone who knelt down, pushed back the flap, and peeped through the slit could plainly see that part of the front room, near the fire-place, where Cazalet's table stood.

Without a sound Philippa sank on her knees, gently pushed back the flap with a hat-pin, and peered through. She saw the electric light mechanic standing over the table, trying the drawers with a skeleton key. Though she had suspected it, the reality shook her horribly. Breathless she watched him succeed in unlocking the middle drawer—containing nothing but clean stationery in exquisite order. Then methodically he went down all the drawers on that side of the kneehole, and after careful search in them all, began upon the other side.

Just as he had placed the key in the drawer wherein the secret correspondence lay, he heard an electric bell ring sharply, twice; and with extraordinary rapidity, sprang back to his place among his tools on the floor. There was a pause of a few seconds. Slowly he rose, listened, and was creeping back towards the writing-table—when a latch-key clicked in the door and Miss Western walked in.

"Drop those keys," said she, shortly. "I have been watching you for the past five minutes."

"Look 'ere—who are you a-talkin' to?"

"To a thief," she replied, promptly, "and one who will be safe in the lock-up in a few minutes' time."

"Oh, no, he won't, not by a long sight," cried the man, dodging her and darting out of the door. He fell right into the arms of the ascending constable, who was followed by the porter belonging to the offices.

Philippa pounced upon the skeleton keys, and held them out in triumph to the policeman.

"Game's up," said the burglar, amicably. "All right, I'll go quiet."

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"'DROP THOSE KEYS!' SHE SAID. 'LOOK 'ERE—WHO ARE YOU A-TALKING TO?' 'TO A TIME.' 'OH, NO, HE WON'T!' CRIED THE MAN, DARTING OUT OF THE

An hour later the excitement was over, and Philippa, left alone in the office, sat before the fire wondering what she ought to do next. Her mind seemed to be working like a rat in a cage, springing this way and that in search of a way out. The capture of the spy had confirmed her worst suspicions. She knew now that the correspondence passing between Cazalet and what she termed in her mind "the Lopez Gang" must be considered by the authorities to be of the highest importance.

What troubled her was that, in her anxiety to test the reasonableness of her suspicions, she had been guilty of a cardinal error. She saw now that she ought never to have spoken to the policeman. By so doing she had shown the Department clearly that Cazalet

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THIEF,' SHE REPLIED, 'AND ONE WHO WILL BE SAFE IN THE LOCK-UP IN A FEW MINUTES DOOR. HE FELL RIGHT INTO THE ARMS OF THE ASCENDING CONSTABLE."

had something to conceal, and that she was in his confidence. She ought to have allowed the man to get away—her own return should have seemed the merest chance or accident. On no account should she have caused it to be supposed that she was on the look-out for what had occurred.

Her false step involved her in new difficulties. If she did what she first intended—broke the lock of the drawer, and took all the compromising papers home with her, she would certainly have her pocket picked, or her bag stolen, or both, on her way home.

And she could not communicate with Cazalet. He would be at home now—she might just catch him before he left his rooms to take the train to Henwood Heath. But the device of the electric-light mechanic had

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shown her that their wire was tapped. She dared not use the telephone.

Should she burn the compromising documents? As things stood between herself and Cazalet, she hardly dared. She had so unwisely enraged him by her blunt speech and opinions that she felt he might use such a proceeding as a pretext for turning her off without a reference. Besides—to break the lock of a writing-table drawer is an extreme course, even if one has a screw-driver, which she had not, nor any other tool except a pair of scissors.

If the thing was considered so urgent, she conjectured that the Secret Service men, when they found the letters were unposted, would probably try to enter the office during the course of the night—probably about eleven o'clock, before the porter locked the outer door.

By staying herself in the office all night, she could prevent this, for each door had, upon the inside, a stout bolt, which would take a long time to file through, even when the Yale latch had been dealt with.

She argued that, owing to the capture and removal of the disguised detective, the house would have been unwatched during at least part of the afternoon; and if she bolted herself in and made no sign, it would be supposed that she had gone home as usual. The offices had dark blinds, provided when the lighting orders were in force; and thick curtains in addition, so that she could use a light without being seen from without.

She had some buns, also the wherewithal to make tea, and fortunately the coal bunker was full. She could manage well enough until the following morning.

A considerable portion of the day's work still remained to be done; and when she had decided to remain all night where she was, she settled herself down to tackle it.

She found herself oddly shaken. Her mind refused to concentrate. After struggling for a while, she reflected that she had many long hours before her, and so sat herself down by the fire, got out the knitting which she always brought with which to fill in an idle hour, and began to brood over her dreary prospects when she was no longer Cazalet's secretary.

She had no near relatives, and those she did possess only tolerated her as long as she made no appeal for financial assistance. She lived in a gaunt, barrack-like hostel for working ladies. It might be weeks—months—before she got another job. It was even possible that her having been secretary to Cazalet might prejudice her—stand in the way of her getting more of this work she loved. Loved! Yes, and what of the man for whom she worked? She was perilously near loving him too—faults and all. If his career were spoiled, she felt as though the blow would fall upon her also.

Her fine, capable hands slipped in and out with the long wooden needles, as she fashioned—is it necessary to state—a jumper? She thought over the early war days, when she was a young, shy clerk in the Department—and of the day when Cazalet made his appearance in khaki, limping from a wound in the ankle—a limp he had since got rid of altogether.

The afternoon passed quietly away. The telephone rang once or twice, but, as she wished it to be supposed that she was not there, she did not answer it. After she had darkened the rooms and made tea, moving without noise in her stockinged feet, she felt better and was able to grapple with her work and complete it.

She was twice disturbed, between seven and eight, by the ringing of the telephone bell. This was curious, as nobody was ever in the office about that time. She remained motionless until it ceased its insistent appeal. After the second time she heard the porter come upstairs, grumbling, and try the door. If he had brought his key up with him, she would be discovered, and she trembled a little. However, he had not. He tried the door, and called to know whether she was within. As he heard no sound, he evidently concluded that she was not; and went downstairs.

She felt certain that those watching were uncertain of her whereabouts, and had rung up the porter, asking him to ascertain that she was not there.

Before ten o'clock she had finished her jumper—a charming creation in pale lilac fleecy wool, with white borders. As she laid it down, she yawned, partly with weariness and partly with hunger. She had no intention of undressing; but she kept a brush and comb in the office, and thought she might as well beguile the time by taking down her hair and giving it a good brushing, after the long anxious day. She therefore removed her blouse, and let her abundant bronze locks shower about her. The brushing over, she found a bit of ribbon in her work-bag and tied them loosely on the nape of her neck. Then, with a sudden impulse, she took up the lilac jumper and slipped it on, instead of resuming her dark working blouse. The coquettish garment was low at the neck and left the spring of her milky throat visible.

Catching sight of herself in the glass above the mantel, she was guilty of a blush and a smile. She looked about half the age she did when seated at her office table.

Just as she was about to re-coil her streaming hair, her eye fell upon the writing-table containing the letters. Surely the drawer wherein they lay was a trifle—just the eighth of an inch—protruded from its socket? She

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"THE COMPETENT, ALMOST SUPERCILIOUS, SECRETARY HAD BECOME AN APPEALING GIRL, STRUGGLING WITH AN OVERPOWERING FIT OF SHYNESS."

darted at it. Yes! It was open! The detective, when she ran in upon him, must have just turned the key in it!

The letters were all there—intact. She took them out slowly, and laid them down in a pile with the answers Cazalet had written and which she had not posted.

She contemplated them. Dared she burn them? If so, she could put on her hat and go home and have supper. It would not then matter if she were waylaid—it would not matter if the office were searched.

She determined to do it. Swiftly, though without noise, she began to put all things meticulously tidy. She would burn the papers the last thing before leaving. She sat down in the arm-chair by the fire to put on her walking shoes; and then she heard quiet footfalls ascending the staircase.

Outside the door, they paused. Somebody knocked. She remained absolutely still. There was some slight delay, a faint jingling ("skeleton keys," thought she), and then a key of some kind was carefully inserted into

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the latch. As she had bolted herself in, the door, of course, did not open. It was shaken—once—twice. She rose without a sound, crept to the pile of papers, took them in her hands. And at the moment she became conscious—horribly conscious—of her second great blunder that day! For she heard the click of the flap of the letter-box, and knew that the intruder was peeping through, as she herself had done, and could see, not only the lighted room, but herself standing there on the hearthrug.

"Jove!" said a surprised voice. "Someone is there! Who is it? Let me in, can't you? My key seems to have gone wrong!"

She gave a choked cry. It was Cazalet.

She ran across the room, drew the bolt, opened the door.

They stood confronted.

He saw a young Diana with downcast eyes and a faintly flushed face framed in rippling bronze locks, which caught the light at their edges and framed her in an aureole of glory.

He came in quickly, shut the door sharply behind him, while he said in a low, unusual tone: "You! What in the world——?"

She made a beseeching gesture with both hands. It was curious, their relations seemed to have changed completely. The competent, almost supercilious, secretary had become an appealing girl, struggling with an overpowering fit of shyness. "I thought you were in Hampshire," she faltered.

"Naturally. But I did not go. That is, I started, but left the train at Woking and came back." He went up to the fire, stood still and stared into the flames. Then he lifted his face, with a deprecating smile. "Take your triumph," said he. "You were right this morning, and I was wrong. I eat humble-pie. Things have happened to-day. I have almost cut my own throat, but—thanks to you—not quite! Not quite!"

She gave a sob. "Oh, thank God! Thank God!" And turned away.

He went to the open, gaping drawer of the writing-table. "Where's all that Lazarus correspondence?" he asked, sharply.

"Here!" She thrust into his hands the letters and his unposted replies. "I was just going to burn them," said she.

He took them with a curious expression on his face.

"I did not know you could get at my locked drawers."

She smiled with faint irony. "I cannot. But the Chief's spy could—and did—only I just managed to prevent his laying hands on these."

He broke in. "Then they did search?"

"They did."

"And you spoilt their game!"

"Yes, but I went to work terribly clumsily"—she poured out her story, he standing the while, his eyes fixed upon her as if he had never seen her before.

As she spoke, she was twisting her hair into a loose coil and fastening it with quick deft touches. "I ought never to have allowed them to suppose that I was on the alert—that we had anything to fear," she lamented.

"They knew, right enough, that I had something to fear," he replied, dryly. "But you speak as if you identified yourself with me—as though you had plunged into all this—what you call flirting with treason—in order to get me out?"

He was staring at her so disconcertingly that the colour rose hotly to her face. "Naturally," she faltered, "I had to save you if I could." Then, with a little laugh, "I said I would hold on till the end of the week."

"So it was a question of your professional honour?"

She acquiesced. He did not seem particularly gratified.

"You have probably done more for me than I can ever pay," said he, in a low voice. "And all for—professional honour."

"I must go home," said Miss Western, decidedly; and went to fetch her hat and coat.

"But before I go," she added, urgently, "let me see you—actually see you—burn the things!"

He shook his head. "I'm not going to burn them until the Chief has seen them," he told her. "I am going on to him now. I—I should like to take you with me—you have behaved so admirably—and I think he would like to thank you himself."

She stood, glowing like a rose as she gazed incredulously at him; and raising his glance to her face he laughed, more freely, more naturally than she had ever heard him.

"But what am I to do if you go giving notice again?" he asked. "The thing might become a habit, you know, and I should never feel safe. Hadn't you better resign? I'll find you another post! Only—if you take on this one, you'll never be able to give notice! You'll have to stick it for the rest of your life!"

The changes that swept over her face as he spoke were wonderful. There were pride, doubt, incredulity, joy—and—yes! there *was* the response he hungered for!

"Oh, my dear," he whispered, as he caught her in his arms and held her for one moment crushed against his heart, "this is atrocious of me! It seems so—so irreverent, somehow, to propose to you in such a place, at such an hour! Forgive me and come with me to see Bull-Manning! He'll trust me fast enough when he knows that you have me in hand!"

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Jottings from my Diary by OWEN NARES

AGE 3 MONTHS.
Photo. Salmon.

THE way in which I came to choose the stage as a profession was, I think, rather exceptional. When I was a boy, about fourteen or fifteen, my mother thought that perhaps one day it would be a good thing for me to try my luck as an actor, and with this end in view she revived an old acquaintance with Sir Herbert — then Mr. — Tree. He very kindly sent us two seats for his theatre and said he would see me.

I well remember the awe and wonder that the beautiful production of "Richard II." inspired in me. But the supreme moment came when we were led to the presence of the great man himself.

Tree had a charming reception-room adjoining his dressing-room, and we awaited him there. A splendid lady was sitting on the club fender in front of the fire fondling one of the great Scotch deerhounds that appeared in the production. She was charming and condescending, and told us that Mr. Tree would come in in a moment. We were too much of country cousins to recognize the famous Miss Constance Collier.



AGE 3½.
Photo. Salmon.



AGE 14.
Photo. Lallie Charles.

Then, almost before I realized his entrance, Tree was looking at me with his piercing, steely, light-blue eyes. He was in the magnificent kingly robes of Richard, and wore a fair beard; but it was the strange quality of his eyes that struck me most.

Contrary to his general rule, he did not try to dissuade me from going on the stage.

Years after, when I had the pleasure and privilege to be acting with him at His Majesty's, I found out that he gave up a great deal of his time to seeing young aspirants with the sole object of telling the obviously unlikely ones what a foolish thing they would be doing in adopting the stage as a profession.

However, at our first meeting he greatly excited me by sending to

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ask his manager if the small part of a boy in a forthcoming tour had yet been filled.

Soon the answer came that the part *had* been filled, so "there was nothing for me at present."

This was really just as well, because my mother had really no idea of my going on the stage at that age, but had asked Mr. Tree to see me with a view to his possible help in the future.

There is a topical interest, by the way, in a story concerning Tree's Richard II.—a story which naturally interests me on account of the circumstances of our first meeting. Tree was once playing Richard in Dublin, and was invited to lunch with a famous judge who was a great Shakespearean scholar. The talk turned on the play of the previous night, "Richard II.," and a lady exclaimed: "Oh, Mr. Tree, why did you appear in such a dishevelled state and look so woebegone when you arrived on the coast of Wales?" "Ah," replied Tree, "you see, Richard had just come back from governing Ireland."



WHEN HE FIRST BEGAN TO STUDY FOR THE STAGE.
Photo. Ellis & Walery.



A PRESENT-DAY PORTRAIT.
Photo. Bassano.

By the time I came to leave school I had not much idea of going on the stage, but it happened that I obtained an introduction to Miss Rosina Filippi and asked her to take me into her rehearsal classes. She was quite glad to take young men who would devote all their time to working with her lady students, and I became a "Filippian."

Those were happy days, but it was such a long time before I could get a job actually on the stage that I regarded such of my fellow-students who might be "walking on" or playing a tiny part with tremendous envy and reverence.

One in particular, Donald Calthrop, excited a very bitter jealousy. He must have created a record at this time by appearing in four theatres every night! He played a small part in the first act of "The Beloved Vagabond" at His Majesty's. He then went into the second act of a play with Miss Marie Tempest at the Comedy. From that to a small part of a naval officer in the third act of "The Admirable Crichton" at the Duke of York's, and then he rushed over to the Adelphi to appear at the end of "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch." I should think this effort must be unique.

Calthrop is as entertaining as he is clever, and one of his stories has been a source of much amusement to me. It concerns a well-known singer, who one night went up to top B in breathless silence. Grating through it there came a raucous juvenile voice from the gods:—

"My hye! Wouldn't she be a stunner to 'awk bananas!"

My chance came through the kindness of Mr. Frederick Harrison, who allowed me to walk on in a play called "Her Father" at the Haymarket. I had to appear as a distinguished guest at a tea-party, and, much to my chagrin, as a very elderly gentleman. My make-up was quite lamentably bad, and I am convinced that I never looked younger on the stage.

I was fairly launched in the profession, however, and after a brief appearance at the St. James's as understudy in Sir Arthur Pinero's "Thunderbolt," I spent

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the next year or so touring in "The Thief," and met the lady who afterwards became my wife. Those were perhaps the most affluent days I had ever enjoyed. I received the princely salary of fifty shillings a week, and, strange and incredible as it must appear nowadays, I did myself jolly well on it. I lived with another man, and we always seemed to have plenty to eat, and in addition played golf about three times a week.

By the way, golf is the redemption of touring. My advice to every touring actor who doesn't play golf is straightway to take up the game.

And that reminds me of a rather amusing story that Gerald du Maurier tells against himself of a golfing adventure he had when on tour some years ago with the late Sir Herbert Tree. They were at Liverpool, and one day Du Maurier had arranged to have a game on one of the famous Liverpool courses with Lewis Waller. At the last moment Waller had to cry off as he was feeling too seedy to play, so Du Maurier went alone to the links on the chance of getting a game with some stranger.

At that time his handicap was about five, and he rather fancied himself as an exponent of the Royal and Ancient game. Arrived at the club-house, he found no one who wanted a game, so he was just going to start on a solitary practice round when a somewhat unpromising individual dashed up and asked him if he would care for a match. The stranger looked as though his handicap ought to be about thirty, but Du Maurier, although somewhat bored at the prospect of a dull round, condescendingly said he didn't mind giving him a game.

The stranger drove first, and hit the ball about two hundred and seventy yards straight down the middle of the course. Du Maurier, a little shaken by this display, propelled his ball a few yards in the direction of cover-point, and so the game went on. Du Maurier had struck an off-day. After the first six or seven holes the stranger was about five under fours and Du Maurier was averaging a steady nine.



IN "OLD HEIDELBERG."

At last, in desperation, he exclaimed: "I really can't understand what's the matter with my game," to which the stranger ironically replied: "I'll tell you. You can't bally well play."

He turned out to be Mr. Stanley Froy, one of the best-known amateurs of the day, which shows that one always ought to treat unknown opponents with great respect.

I rather think that in my youthful days I made better progress as a golfer than as an actor, for, after being on the stage some time, I still found myself in receipt of a salary of a guinea a week. As one of the students in Sir George Alexander's revival of "Old Heidelberg," I am afraid I made more noise in the dressing-room than on the stage. And some of the conceit was knocked out of me when I was engaged for a play called

Photos. Ellis & Walery.



IN "THE THIEF."

"The Crucible" at the Comedy, my first real chance in London. I played the part of a somewhat degenerate weakling and

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made a small success. One of the critics hailed me as "Mr. Ivan Wares, a name which is unfamiliar to me." It was unfamiliar to me, also! But ever since Mr. Henry Ainley, who played the leading part, has affectionately called me "Earthenwares."

My next engagement was at the St. James's in a play called "The Ogre." I was really going to play the part which was afterwards undertaken by Mr. A. E. Matthews, but after the first rehearsal I was deemed unfit and relegated to a much smaller part. In after years Sir George Alexander would often recall with amusement the fact that Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, the author of the play, was most anxious not only to replace me, but Miss Gladys Cooper also.

A recital of parts and plays is apt to prove monotonous except to oneself, but I have very distinct recollections, after appearing in "Diplomacy," of joining Sir Herbert Tree and making a plunge into Shakespeare with singularly unsuccessful results.

As Prince Hal in "Henry IV.," clad in armour, I had to fight Matheson Lang. The odds were most uneven in any case, but to make matters worse the elbow-piece of my suit got twisted so that I could not bend my sword-arm. As one of the papers remarked, "For several moments the succession seemed in doubt."

Lang, who is one of the best raconteurs I have ever met, once found himself in a somewhat similar predicament. Playing the title-*rôle* in "Romeo," he hurt his elbow, and had to play with one arm in a sling. In the street fight he was supposed to flourish a sword in one hand and a dagger in the other, his antagonist doing the same. On this occasion he could only use the sword, and when in the natural order of the play he defeated his opponent, the audience cheered him to the echo for his "derring-do" against overpowering odds.

I like best of all, however, his story of his early days, when he was in the habit of going into the fields every morning with a fellow-actor and there declaiming passages from Shakespeare in order to improve their elocution. One fine day, in the midst of the soliloquy from "Hamlet," a little shiny head suddenly appeared above the hedge and a piping voice squeaked out: "Be you lunies?" Intending to wither him up, in thundering tones Lang replied, "Friend, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy." It fell quite flat, for he only chuckled and said, "Dearie me, I've been in an asylum myself."

It was while I was in "Diplomacy" that I first acted for the films. I was asked to undertake a part by the late Sir Hubert von Herkomer, who had built a small film studio in the grounds of his wonderful house



IN "THE WILLOW TREE"
Photo Foulsham & Banfield.

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IN "THE CINDERELLA MAN."
Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

at Bushey, Herts. Sir Hubert was quite the most remarkable personality I have ever met. He used to take a prominent part in his own film plays, and my first meeting with him was at a ruined windmill near Barnet one beautiful summer morning, when he was covered with false hair and flour in the character of the worthy miller.

My experience of pictures had been of the slightest, when, during the run of "Romance," I was asked to play a part in the film "Just a Girl." I looked forward to the production with some trepidation, particularly as I was told that I should have to ride a horse, an exercise I had not indulged in since a rather bad accident when a small boy of about seven.

The first "take" was to be an exterior at Cheddar, in Somerset, which was supposed to represent the wilds of the Australian bush. I dashed down there on a Sunday, and a few moments after arrival found myself once again in the saddle. Fortunately, the fiery steed of the play was represented by a quiet and somewhat jaded local hack. I found the camera and the rest of the party on the heights above the famous gorge, and I was asked to try to induce my steed to get into a position perilously near the edge of a precipice about two hundred feet deep. By this time the horse, with unerring animal instinct, had discovered how little acquainted I was with equestrian procedure, and knew perfectly well who was the master. However, at length he was persuaded to take up the required position, with his head facing away from the cliff. Everything being ready, I

IN "ROMANCE." [*Photo.* *Foulsham & Banfield.*

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was told to ride slowly forward. Imagine my horror when, in answer to my exhortations, with the cliff only a few yards behind, the horse started steadily backwards! I dismounted with remarkable celerity, and registered an inward vow to give up the film business.

Apart from my little adventure at Cheddar, I have had no very alarming experiences during my picture career, and I prefer to think of the letters—humorous, delightful, flattering, and critical—I have received.

The screen gives one a very wide publicity, which is, of course, an asset of considerable importance. I receive letters from all parts of the world, whereas before I began to work for the pictures my name had not probably spread beyond Tooting.

I am often asked if I like acting for the film better than the stage, and to compare the two methods. To my mind there is no comparison. The one is an art that requires long apprenticeship, infinite tact, weary and hard-working experience and effort, not to speak of natural talent and aptitude. The other is a knack that almost anyone with suitable appearance and a fair amount of intelligence can quickly acquire.



AS "DAVID COPPERFIELD."
Photo. Burford.

Of course, stage experience is of great value in film acting, but the two methods are hugely different. Some people imagine that no experience is necessary for film acting, which reminds me of a story I was told by the manager of the Samuelson Film Company, for whom I work. They had been bothered for several days by an importunate gentleman of some sixty summers who wanted work. So at last, to escape further worry, they allowed him to walk on as one of a large crowd. He appeared to be gratified at the moment, but a day or so later the company received a letter from him saying that as he had already appeared twice on the screen—once as a bookkeeper and once as Father Christmas—he could not possibly agree to walk on again, and would only accept the same sort of parts as those played by Mr. Nares!

Experience is necessary for film work, but not to the same degree as for the stage. The art of the theatre is, to my mind, far more interesting than the art of the screen. This is perhaps one of the reasons I refused an offer from Mr. D. W. Griffiths—the King of the Movies—to join him for five years and give up stage work altogether. The remuneration promised was extraordinary, and I was assured that at the end of the period I should be able to buy a yacht, a castle in Scotland, and a row of houses in Park Lane; but somehow I did not like the idea of abandoning my stage career, particularly as I was flirting with the idea of management.

The opportunity occurred when, after leaving the cast of "Romance," I went to the Palace. My terror at having to sing a song for the first time I shall not easily forget. However, it was while I was under Sir Alfred Butt at the Palace that we made the partnership that materialized at the Queen's Theatre in the production of "The Cinderella Man" and other plays.

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THE FIRST STORY IN THE FUNNIEST SERIES EVER WRITTEN.

The MAN WHO MARRIED AN HOTEL

by P. G. Wodehouse

ILLUSTRATED BY A. WALLIS MILLS.

PEACE had come at last. The Great War, with all its horrors,—its spy plays, its war novels, its articles by our military expert, and its revues with patriotic first-act finales—had passed away like a dark cloud. The time of Reconstruction had arrived, and all the old problems had sneaked back like unwanted dogs from the background into which war had thrust them. There they all were, clamouring for attention, just as they had been five years ago. England was asking herself: "How about Ireland? How about Labour: And what on earth are we to do with Archie?"

To be exact, this last problem was the private perplexity of the Moffam family. It exercised them to the exclusion of all the others.

Archie was a good chap. Everybody admitted that, though his family were perhaps a little less enthusiastic than the outside public. He was All Right, a sportsman, one of the lads, and a good egg. But he did not seem able to make a living. Just before the war started he had passed affably through the Bankruptcy Court and had turned up at home, cheerfully confident that somebody would do something for him. As a matter of fact, somebody did. A perfect stranger. The late Kaiser, in fact. He kept Archie busier than he had ever been in his life for just over five years. But now that period of activity was over, and Archie was back home again, very hard and fit, with a questioning look in the eye which he turned upon his family, which said plainer than if he had spoken the words: "Well, old beans, how do we go? What about it, what?"

It was his brother Rupert, the head of the family, who finally answered the question.

"I think, old man," he said to Archie in the smoking-room at the Beefsteak Club, "you'd better trot over to America and see if you can't wangle something over there. Land of Opportunity, and all that sort of thing, you know."

Archie was agreeable. If he lacked most of the qualities that make for material success, he had at any rate one of them—the willingness to try anything once.

"Just as you say," he replied. "I'd be glad to take a stab at it. As a matter of fact, I've one or two pretty good pals in America. Met 'em in France. There was one chappie—he was a cook in the Rainbow Division—I got very thick with. He asked me to look him up if I ever came over. His pater's a millionaire."

"I can get you several letters of introduction. There's a Mrs. van Tuyl, who was over here two or three years ago. You'll like her."

"Right-o! And as regards what you might call the sordid side of the jolly old expedition——"

"Oh, I'll see that you have plenty of money." Rupert paused for a moment a little thoughtfully. "Enough money," he went on. "But, of course, the idea is that you'll try to get a job, what?"

"Oh, absolutely!" said Archie.

Over in New York, Daniel Brewster, the proprietor of the Cosmopolis Hotel, went placidly about his business. No sympathetic angel whispered the details of this conversation in his ear. "See," as the poet says, "how, regardless of their doom, the little victims play." That was exactly Daniel Brewster's position.

Mutual antipathy is a curious thing, odder even than love at first sight. Scores of people were extremely fond of Archie Moffam, and Daniel Brewster likewise had a large circle of friends. Each, therefore, one would say, had the elements of popularity in him, and there was no reason why they

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should not have got along capitally together, except that they did not.

Of course, their first meeting was unfortunate. Its conditions were such that neither saw the other at his best and sunniest. It happened in the lobby of the Cosmopolis Hotel, on the morning after Archie's arrival in New York. Archie opened the proceedings by addressing the desk-clerk. There was gloom on Archie's brow, and the old fighting spirit of the Moffams gleamed in his eye.

"I say, laddie," said Archie, "I want to see the manager."

"Is there anything I could do, sir?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, old man, I want to kick up a fearful row, and it seems hardly fair to lug you into it. The blighter whose head I want on a charger is the jolly old manager!"

At this point a massive, grey-haired man, who had been standing close by, gazing on the lobby with a look of restrained severity, as if daring it to start anything, joined in the conversation.

"I am the manager," he said.

His eye was cold and hostile. Others, it seemed to say, might like Archie Moffam, but he did not. As a matter of fact, Daniel Brewster was bristling for combat. What he had overheard had shocked him to the core of his being. He owned the Cosmopolis Hotel. It was his own private, personal property, and the thing dearest to him in the world, after his daughter Lucille. He prided himself on the fact that his hotel was not like other hotels, which were run by impersonal companies and shareholders and boards of directors, and consequently lacked the paternal touch which made the Cosmopolis what it was. At other hotels things went wrong, and clients complained. At the Cosmopolis things never went wrong, because he was there on the spot to see that they didn't, and as a result clients never complained. Yet here was this long, thin, string-bean of a young man actually registering annoyance and dissatisfaction before his very eyes. His dislike of Archie Moffam began in that instant.

"What is your complaint?" he inquired, frigidly.

Archie attached himself to the top button of Mr. Brewster's coat, and was immediately dislodged by an irritable jerk of the other's body.

"I took a room here last night," said Archie, quivering with self-pity and reaching absently for the button again. "A dashed expensive room. And there was a beastly tap outside somewhere that went 'drip-drip-drip' all night and kept me awake."

Mr. Brewster was annoyed. He felt that a chink had been found in his armour. Not even the most paternal hotel-proprietor can keep an eye on every tap in his establishment.

"And I put my boots outside my door when I went to bed, and this morning they hadn't been touched. I give you my solemn word! Not touched!"

"Naturally," said Mr. Brewster. "My *employés* are honest."

"But I wanted them cleaned, dash it!"

"There is a shoe-shining parlour in the basement. At the Cosmopolis shoes left outside bedroom doors are not cleaned."

"Then I think the Cosmopolis is a bally rotten hotel!"

Mr. Brewster's compact frame quivered. The unforgivable insult had been offered. Question the legitimacy of Mr. Brewster's parentage, knock Mr. Brewster down and walk on his face with spiked shoes, and you did not irremediably close all avenues to a peaceful settlement. But make a remark like Archie's about his hotel, and war was definitely declared. He stiffened.

"In that case," he said, "I must ask you to give up your room."

"I'm going to give it up! I wouldn't stay in the bally place another minute."

Mr. Brewster walked away, and Archie charged, snorting, round to the cashier's window to demand his bill. It had been his intention in any case, though for dramatic purposes he concealed it from his adversary, to leave the hotel that morning. An exchange of telegrams had resulted in an invitation from his brother Rupert's friend, Mrs. van Tuyl, to her house-party at Bar Harbour, and Archie proposed to go there at once. But oh, the difference between leaving the Cosmopolis as he would have done and leaving it as he did!

"Well," mused Archie, on his way to the station, "one thing's certain. I'll never set foot in *that* bally place again!"

But nothing in this world is certain.

It was about two weeks later that a telegram arrived for Mr. Daniel Brewster. Not that this was unusual, for he was a man who received many telegrams. But this one was rather interesting. It ran:—

Returning New York to-day with darling Archie. Lots of love from us both.—Lucille.

Mr. Brewster was puzzled, not to say startled. When you send your only daughter away to Bar Harbour for the summer minus any entanglements and she mentions in a telegram that she has acquired a darling Archie who sends you lots of love, you are naturally startled. It occurred to Mr. Brewster that by neglecting a careful study of his mail during the past week, as was his bad habit when busy, he had passed an opportunity of keeping abreast with current

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happenings. He recollected now that a letter had arrived from Lucille a day or two before, and he had put it away unopened till he should have leisure to read it. He was extremely busy just now with the preliminaries of building a new hotel, and Lucille was a dear girl, but her letters when on a vacation seldom contained anything that couldn't wait a few days for a reading. He now leaped into the elevator, sprinted along the corridor leading to his suite, and made a dive for the letter.

It was a long letter. Boiling it down, it announced that Lucille had met the most angelic man, an Englishman, and they were both so much in love with each other that they had simply been compelled to slip off and get married at once. Otherwise, they would have kept him posted about things earlier. And, anyway, darling Archie had wanted a quiet wedding, because he said a fellow looked such a chump getting married. And he must learn to love Archie, because Archie was all set to love him very much.

Mr. Brewster sat down abruptly and breathed heavily through his nose.

At about the same time, in a drawing-room on the express from Bar Harbour, Archie Moffam sat contemplating his bride. His brain had been in something of a whirl these last days, but one thought had always emerged clearly from the welter—the thought that this was too good to be true.



"'I SAY, LADDIE,' SAID ARCHIE, 'I WANT TO SEE THE MANAGER—I WANT TO KICK UP A FEARFUL ROW.'"

Mrs. Archie Moffam, *née* Lucille Brewster, was small and slender. She had a little animated face, set in a cloud of dark hair. She was so altogether perfect that Archie was compelled to take the marriage licence out of his inside pocket at intervals and study it furtively, to make himself realize that this miracle of good fortune had really happened to him.

"Honestly, old bean—I mean, dear old thing—I mean darling," said Archie, "I can't believe it!"

"What?"

"What I mean is, I can't understand why you should have married me."

Lucille's eyes opened. She squeezed his hand.

"Why, you're the most wonderful thing in the world, precious! Surely you know that?"

"Absolutely escaped my notice. Are you sure?"

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"Of course I'm sure! You wonder-child! Nobody could see you without loving you!"

Archie heaved an ecstatic sigh. Then a thought crossed his mind. It was a thought which frequently came to mar his bliss.

"I say, I wonder if your father will think that!"

"Of course he will!"

"We've rather sprung this, as it were, on the old lad," said Archie, dubiously. "What sort of a man *is* your father?"

"Father's a darling, too."

"Rummy thing he should own that hotel," said Archie. "I had a frightful row with a blighter of a manager there just before I left for Bar Harbour. Your father ought to sack that chap. He was a blot on the landscape!"

It had been settled by Lucille during the journey that Archie should be broken gently to his father-in-law. That is to say, instead of bounding blithely into Mr. Brewster's presence hand in hand, the happy pair should separate for half an hour or so, Archie hanging around in the offing while Lucille saw her father and told him the whole story, or those chapters of it which she had omitted from her letter for want of space. Then, having impressed Mr. Brewster sufficiently with his luck in having acquired Archie for a son-in-law, she would lead him to where his bit of good fortune awaited him.

The programme worked out admirably in its earlier stages. When the two emerged from Mr. Brewster's room to meet Archie, Mr. Brewster's general idea was that fortune had smiled upon him in an almost unbelievable fashion and had presented him with a son-in-law who combined in almost equal parts the more admirable characteristics of Apollo, Sir Galahad, and Marcus Aurelius. True, he had gathered in the course of the conversation that dear Archie had no occupation and no private means: but Mr. Brewster felt that a great-souled man like Archie didn't need them. You can't have everything, and Archie, according to Lucille's account, was practically a hundred per cent. man in Soul, Looks, Manners, Amiability, and Breeding. These are the things that count. Mr. Brewster proceeded to the lobby in a glow of optimism and geniality.

Consequently, when he perceived Archie, he got a bit of a shock.

"Hullo-ullo-ullo!" said Archie, advancing happily.

"Archie, darling, this is father," said Lucille.

"Good Lord!" said Archie.

There was one of those silences. Mr. Brewster looked at Archie. Archie gazed at Mr. Brewster. Lucille, perceiving without understanding why that the big introduction scene had stubbed its toe on some unlooked-for obstacle, waited anxiously for enlightenment. Meanwhile, Archie continued to inspect Mr. Brewster, and Mr. Brewster continued to drink in Archie.

After an awkward pause of about three and a quarter minutes, Mr. Brewster swallowed once or twice, and finally spoke.

"Lu!"

"Yes, father?"

"Is this true?"

Lucille's grey eyes clouded over with perplexity and apprehension.

"True?"

"Have you really inflicted this—*this* on me for a son-in-law?" Mr. Brewster swallowed a few more times, Archie the while watching with a frozen fascination the rapid shimmying of his new relative's Adam's-apple. "Go away! I want to have a few words alone with this—this—*wassyourdamname?*" he demanded, in an overwrought manner, addressing Archie for the first time.

"I told you, father. It's Moom."

"Moom?"

"It's spelt M-o-f-f-a-m, but pronounced Moom."

"To rhyme," said Archie, helpfully, "with Bluffinghame."

"Lu," said Mr. Brewster, "run away! I want to speak to—to—to——"

"You called me *this* before," said Archie.

"You aren't angry, father, dear?" said Lucille.

'Oh, no! Oh, no! I'm tickled to death!"

When his daughter had withdrawn, Mr. Brewster drew a long breath.

"Now, then!" he said.

"Bit embarrassing, all this, what!" said Archie, chattily. "I mean to say, having met before in less happy circs and what not. Rum coincidence and so forth! How would it be to bury the jolly old hatchet—start a new life—forgive and forget—learn to love each other—and all that sort of rot? I'm game if you are. How do we go? Is it a bet?"

Mr. Brewster remained entirely unsoftened by this manly appeal to his better feelings.

"What the devil do you mean by marrying my daughter?"

Archie reflected.

"Well, it sort of happened, don't you know! You know how these things *are!* Young yourself once, and all that. I was most frightfully in love, and Lu seemed to think it wouldn't be a bad scheme, and one thing led to another, and—well, there you are, don't you know!"

"And I suppose you think you've done pretty well for yourself?"

"Oh, absolutely! As far as I'm concerned,

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"'ARCHIE, DARLING, THIS IS FATHER.' 'GOOD LORD!' SAID ARCHIE."

everything's topping! I've never felt so braced in my life!"

"Yes!" said Mr. Brewster, with bitterness. "I suppose, from your view-point, everything *is* 'topping.' You haven't a cent to your name, and you've managed to fool a rich man's daughter into marrying you. I suppose you looked me up in Bradstreet before committing yourself?"

This aspect of the matter had not struck Archie until this moment.

"I say!" he observed, with dismay. "I never looked at it like that before! I can see that, from your point of view, this must look like a bit of a wash-out!"

"How do you propose to support Lucille, anyway?"

Archie ran a finger round the inside of his collar. He felt embarrassed. His father-in-law was opening up all kinds of new lines of thought.

"Well, there, old bean," he admitted, frankly, "you rather have me!" He turned the matter over for a moment. "I had a sort of idea of, as it were, working, if you know what I mean."

"Working at what?"

"Now, there again you stump me somewhat! The general scheme was that I should kind of look around, you know, and nose about and buzz to and fro till something turned up. That was, broadly speaking, the notion!"

"And how did you suppose my daughter was to live while you were doing all this?"

"Well, I think," said Archie, "I *think* we rather expected *you* to rally round a bit for the nonce!"

"I see! You expected to live on me?"

"Well, you put it a bit crudely, but—as far as I had mapped anything out—that *was* what you might call the general scheme of procedure. You don't think much of it, what? Yes? No?"

Mr. Brewster exploded.

"No! I do not think much of it! Good God! You go out of my hotel—*my* hotel—calling it all the names you could think of—roasting it to beat the band——"

"Trifle hasty!" murmured Archie, apologetically. "Spoke without thinking. Dashed tap had gone *drip-drip-drip* all night—kept me awake—hadn't had breakfast—bygones be bygones——!"

"Don't interrupt! I say, you go out of my hotel, knocking as none has ever knocked it since it was built, and you sneak straight off and marry my daughter without my knowledge."

"Did think of wiring for blessing. Slipped

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the old bean, somehow. You know how one forgets things ! "

" And now you come back and calmly expect me to fling my arms round you and kiss you, and support you for the rest of your life ! "

" Only while I'm nosing about and buzzing to and fro."

" Well, I suppose I've got to support you. There seems no way out of it. I'll tell you exactly what I propose to do. You think my hotel is a pretty poor hotel, eh ? Well, you'll have plenty of opportunity of judging, because you're coming to live here. I'll let you have a suite and I'll let you have your meals, but outside of that—nothing doing ! Nothing doing ! Do you understand what I mean ? "

" Absolutely ! You mean ' Napoo ' ! "

" You can sign checks for a reasonable amount in my restaurant, and the hotel will look after your laundry. But not a cent do you get out of me. And, if you want your shoes shined, you can pay for it yourself in the basement. If you leave them outside your door, I'll instruct the floor-waiter to throw them down the air-shaft. Do you understand ? Good ! Now, is there anything more you want to ask ? "

Archie smiled a propitiatory smile.

" Well, as a matter of fact, I was going to ask if you would stagger along and have a bite with us in the grill-room ? "

" I will not ! "

" I'll sign the check," said Archie, ingratiatingly. " You don't think much of it ? Oh, right-o ! "

There is a perverseness in human nature which never permits us to know when we are well off. A canvass of the opinions of the inhabitants of New York would certainly have resulted in a verdict that Archie Moffam, the perpetual free guest of the Cosmopolis, was on velvet. The Cosmopolis is the best-run hotel in the city, and famous alike for the comfort of its rooms and the excellence of its cuisine. To be set down at the Cosmopolis with a free suite and a free hand in the matter of signing checks for meals would have been most New Yorkers' idea of heaven. Yet Archie's generous soul chafed him. For a time he was perfectly happy ; then, gradually, " shades of the prison-house," so to speak, " began to close upon the growing boy." In other words, he got dashed fed-up with the place.

After a month of breakfasting, lunching, and dining at the Cosmopolis, his chief problem was the difficulty of making up his mind whether he loathed the grill-room or the main dining-room the more intensely.

It was at the end of this first month that he became really intimate with Salvatore.

Salvatore was the dark, sinister-looking waiter who attended, among other tables, to the one at the far end of the grill-room, at which Archie usually sat. For several weeks Archie's conversations with the other dealt exclusively with the bill of fare and its contents ; but, as time went by and he began to long for human companionship, he found himself becoming more personal. Besides, there was something about the waiter's demeanour that appealed to Archie's always sympathetic heart. Salvatore was a man with a grievance. You could tell that by looking at him ; and Archie had been looking at him every day for a month. Whether he was merely homesick and brooding on the lost delights of his sunny native land, or whether his trouble was more definite, could only be ascertained by inquiry. So Archie inquired. Even before the war and its democratizing influences, Archie had always lacked that reserve which characterizes most Britons ; and since the war he had looked on nearly everybody he met as a brother.

" There's something on your mind, old thing," said Archie.

" Sare ? "

" I say there would appear to be something on your mind besides your hair. What seems to be the trouble ? "

The waiter shrugged his shoulders, as if indicating an unwillingness to inflict his troubles upon one of the tipping classes.

" Come on ! " said Archie, encouragingly. " All pals here ! Barge along, old bean, and let's have it ! "

Salvatore, thus urged, proceeded, in a hurried undertone—with one eye on the head waiter—to lay bare his soul. What he said was not very coherent, but Archie could make out enough of it to gather that it was a sad story of excessive hours.

" Always," said Salvatore. " Always—always—I am in this dam hotel ! "

" I know what you mean, laddie ! " said Archie, feelingly. He tapped the waiter earnestly on the chest with his oyster-fork. " My dear old chap," he said, " there's only one thing to be done. You must strike ! It's the only scheme. Everybody's doing it now ! "

Salvatore shrugged his shoulders again. It appeared that he had already sounded the other waiters guardedly on the matter of a strike, but the spineless peons seemed to be unwilling to jeopardize their jobs by making any demonstration. And you couldn't strike by yourself.

The reasonableness of this was plain to Archie. He mused a while. The waiter's hard case touched him.

" I'll tell you what," he said, at last. " You come along with me when you're

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off duty, and we'll beard the old boy in his den. I'll introduce you, and you get that extract from Italian opera off your chest which you've just been singing to me. It can't fail. He'll probably hand you his bank-roll."

The result was that Mr. Brewster, busy with accounts in his private room, was infuriated that evening by the entry of his son-in-law, heading a procession consisting of himself and a dark, furtive person who looked like something connected with the executive staff of the Black Hand.

"Not interrupting you, what?" began Archie, amiably. "I say, this sportsman here has a few well-chosen words to say to you on the subject of dirty work at the cross-roads, so to speak. It seems the lad is oppressed and ground down and what not. He's a waiter in the grill-room, so I suppose you're probably old pals. If not, let me do the honours. Mr. Brewster, our courteous and popular boss. Salvatore (I wouldn't swear that's his name, but it sounded like it), the Italian Whirlwind. Seconds out! Time! Go to it, laddie! Spill the bad news!"

And before Mr. Brewster could get his breath Salvatore had begun to spill. It was not such a long harangue as he had given Archie in the grill-room, for in the middle of it Mr. Brewster, finding speech, ejected him from the room. But it sufficed to bring the hotel-proprietor to boiling-point. Though not a linguist, he could follow the discourse closely enough to realize that the waiter was dissatisfied with conditions in his hotel. And we have already seen Mr. Brewster's attitude towards people who criticized the Cosmopolis.

"You're fired!" said Mr. Brewster.

Salvatore receded, muttering what sounded like a passage from Dante.

"And I wish to heaven," added Mr. Brewster, eyeing his son-in-law malignantly, "I could fire *you!*"

That night, meeting his father-in-law



"BEFORE MR. BREWSTER COULD GET HIS BREATH SALVATORE HAD BEGUN. THE HARANGUE SUFFICED TO BRING THE HOTEL-PROPRIETOR TO BOILING-POINT."

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in the elevator, Archie found occasion to touch upon Salvatore again.

"I say, that chappie with the grievance, whom you slung out this evening. I don't know if it interests you, but he appears to be slightly narked. Peeved to a degree, if you know what I mean."

Mr. Brewster signified that he was not interested. Archie chuckled amusedly.

"He said he meant to pay you out. He didn't specify how. I say," said Archie, cheerfully, "perhaps he means to waylay you in a dark alley somewhere and insert about six inches of a stiletto in your lower ribs. Rather a lark, what! I understand these Italian chappies are always doing that sort of thing. Oh, well, you've had a long and happy life!"

Archie's optimism, however, was not rewarded. Day followed day, and Mr. Brewster preserved an unpunctured skin; and his manner towards his son-in-law was becoming more and more a manner that would have caused gossip on the plantation if Simon Legree had exhibited it in his relations with Uncle Tom. Mr. Brewster's normal distaste for his daughter's husband was increased about this time by the fact that he was worried over business matters; and, when your man of affairs is worried over business, he is apt to become irritable even with his nearest and dearest. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the spectacle of his son-in-law mooning about the hotel should have afflicted Mr. Brewster to some extent. At any rate, whether it is to be wondered at or not, it did.

The details of the business which was worrying Mr. Brewster were at first hidden from Archie, and he made no effort to probe into them. It was enough for his simple, unspoiled nature that his father-in-law should be worried. That was happiness enough for him.

It was Lucille who apprised him of the nature of the trouble.

"Archie, darling," said Lucille, one afternoon as they sat at lunch, "it's such a shame about father!"

There was a troubled look in Lucille's grey eyes. Life was not running as it should these days.

"I know!" said Archie. "I was hoping that Italian chappie would have done something definite by this time."

Lucille regarded him with surprise.

"Why, has father been talking to you?"

"He hasn't been very chatty of late. What do you mean?"

"Well, you spoke as if you knew all about it. I mean, all about Salvatore. The waiter, you know, whom father dismissed."

"I remember the chappie. What's he been doing?"

"Well, you know father wants to build a new hotel."

"I heard something about it. But he doesn't confide in me much, you know."

"Well, he does want to build an hotel, and he thought he'd got the site, and everything, and could start building right away, when this hitch occurred."

"What hitch, queen of my soul?"

The waiter was hovering over their table with dishes. Lucille waited till he had gone.

"Well," she said, "this man Salvatore's mother owns a little newspaper and tobacco shop right in the middle of the site where father, poor darling, wants to build; and there's no way of getting him out without buying the shop, and he won't sell. At least, he's made his mother promise that she won't sell."

"A boy's best friend is his mother," said Archie, approvingly.

"So father's in despair."

"I knew old friend Salvatore would come out strong in the end if you only gave him time. Great pal of mine. Man of ripe intellect."

Lucille's small face lightened. She gazed at Archie with proud affection. She had known all along that he was the one to solve this difficulty.

"You're wonderful, darling! Is he really a friend of yours?"

"Absolutely! Quite the old college chum!"

"Then it's all right. If you went to him and got him to sell the shop, father would be happy."

"I know. That is the objection, of course."

"Think how grateful father would be to you! It would make all the difference."

Archie turned this over in his mind.

"I see what you mean. How much did your father offer the Johnnie for his shop?"

"I don't know. There is father. Call him over and ask him."

Archie glanced over to where Mr. Brewster had sunk moodily into a chair at a neighbouring table.

"*You* call him," he said. "You know him better."

"Let's go over to him."

They crossed the room. Lucille sat down opposite her father. Archie draped himself over a chair in the background.

"Father, dear," said Lucille. "Archie has got an idea!"

"Archie?" said Mr. Brewster, incredulously.

"This is me," said Archie, indicating himself with a spoon. "The tall, distinguished-looking bird."

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"What new fool-thing is he up to now?"

"It's a splendid idea, father. He wants to help you over your new hotel."

"Wants to run it for me, I suppose?"

"By Jove!" said Archie, reflectively. "That's not a bad scheme! I never thought of running an hotel. I shouldn't mind taking a stab at it."

"He has thought of a way of getting rid of Salvatore and his shop."

For the first time Mr. Brewster's interest in the conversation seemed to stir. He looked sharply at his son-in-law.



"He has, has he?" he said.

Archie balanced a roll on a fork and inserted a plate underneath. The roll bounded away into a corner.

"Sorry!" said Archie. "My fault, absolutely! I owe you a roll. I'll sign a check for it. Oh, about this sportsman Salvatore. Well, it's like this, you know. He and I are great pals. I've known him for years and years. At least, it seems like years and years. Lu was suggesting that I seek him out in his lair and ensnare him with my diplomatic manner and superior brain power and what not."

"It was your idea, precious," said Lucille.

Mr. Brewster was silent. Much as it went against the grain to have to admit it, there seemed to be something in this.

"What do you propose to do?"

"Become a jolly old ambassador. How much did you offer the chappie?"

"Three thousand dollars. Twice as much as the place is worth. He's holding out on me for revenge."

"Ah, but how did you offer it to him, what? I mean to say, I bet you got your lawyer to write him a letter full of whereases, peradventures, and parties of the first part, and so forth. No good, old companion!"

"Don't call me old companion!"

"All wrong, laddie! Nothing like it, dear heart! No good at all, friend of my youth! Take it from your Uncle Archibald! I'm a student of human nature, and I know a thing or two!"

"That's not much," growled Mr. Brewster, who was finding his son-in-law's superior manner a little trying.

"Now, don't interrupt, father!" said Lucille, severely. "Can't you see that Archie is going to be tremendously clever in a minute?"

"He's got to show me!"

"MY DEAR OLD TOP, I'M SORRY TO SPOIL YOUR DAY-DREAMS AND ALL THAT, BUT AREN'T YOU FORGETTING THAT THE SHOP BELONGS TO ME?"

"What you ought to do," said Archie, "is to let me go and see him, taking the stuff in crackling bills. I'll roll them about on the table in front of him. That'll fetch him!" He prodded Mr. Brewster encouragingly with a roll. "I'll tell you what to do. Give me three thousand of the best

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and crispest, and I'll undertake to buy that shop. It can't fail, laddie!"

"Don't call me laddie!" Mr. Brewster pondered. "Very well," he said at last. "I didn't know you had so much sense," he added, grudgingly.

"Oh, positively!" said Archie. "Beneath a rugged exterior I hide a brain like a buzz-saw. Sense? I exude it, laddie; I drip with it!"

There were moments during the ensuing days when Mr. Brewster permitted himself to hope; but more frequent were the moments when he told himself that a pronounced chump like his son-in-law could not fail somehow to make a mess of the negotiations. His relief, therefore, when Archie curveted into his private room and announced that he had succeeded was great.

"You really managed to make that wop sell out?"

Archie brushed some papers off the desk with a careless gesture, and seated himself on the vacant spot.

"Absolutely! I spoke to him as one old friend to another, sprayed the bills all over the place; and he sang a few bars from 'Rigoletto,' and signed on the dotted line."

"You're not such a fool as you look," owned Mr. Brewster.

Archie scratched a match on the desk and lit a cigarette.

"It's a jolly little shop," he said. "I took quite a fancy to it. Full of newspapers, don't you know, and cheap novels, and some weird-looking sort of chocolates, and cigars with the most fearfully attractive labels. I think I'll make a success of it. It's bang in the middle of a dashed good neighbourhood. One of these days somebody will be building a big hotel round about there, and that'll help trade a lot. I look forward to ending my days on the other side of the counter with a full set of white whiskers and a skull-cap, beloved by everybody. Everybody'll say, 'Oh, you *must* patronize that quaint, delightful old blighter! He's quite a character.'"

Mr. Brewster's air of grim satisfaction had given way to a look of discomfort, almost of alarm. He presumed his son-in-law was merely indulging in badinage; but even so, his words were not soothing.

"Well, I'm much obliged," he said. "That infernal shop was holding up everything. Now I can start building right away."

Archie raised his eyebrows.

"But, my dear old top, I'm sorry to spoil your day-dreams and stop you chasing rainbows, and all that, but aren't you forgetting that the shop belongs to me? I don't at all know that I want to sell, either!"

"I gave you the money to buy that shop!"

"And dashed generous of you it was, too!" admitted Archie, unreservedly. "It was the first money you ever gave me, and I shall always tell interviewers that it was you who founded my fortunes. Some day, when I'm the Newspaper-and-Tobacco-Shop King, I'll tell the world all about it in my autobiography."

Mr. Brewster rose dangerously from his seat.

"Do you think you can hold me up, you—you worm?"

"Well," said Archie, "the way I look at it is this. Ever since we met, you've been after me to become one of the world's workers, and earn a living for myself, and what not; and now I see a way to repay you for your confidence and encouragement. You'll look me up sometimes at the good old shop, won't you?" He slid off the table and moved towards the door. "There won't be any formalities where you are concerned. You can sign checks for any reasonable amount any time you want a cigar or a stick of chocolate. Well, toodle-oo!"

"Stop!"

"Now what?"

"How much do you want for that damned shop?"

"I don't want money. I want a job. If you are going to take my life-work away from me, you ought to give me something else to do."

"What job?"

"You suggested it yourself the other day. I want to manage your new hotel."

"Don't be a fool! What do you know about managing an hotel?"

"Nothing. It will be your pleasing task to teach me the business while the shanty is being run up."

There was a pause, while Mr. Brewster chewed three inches off a pen-holder.

"Very well," he said at last.

"Topping!" said Archie. "I knew you'd see it. I'll study your methods, what! Adding some of my own, of course. You know, I've thought of one improvement on the Cosmopolis already."

"Improvement on the Cosmopolis!" cried Mr. Brewster, gashed in his finest feelings.

"Yes. There's one point where the old Cosmop slips up badly, and I'm going to see that it's corrected at my little shack. Customers will be entreated to leave their boots outside their doors at night, and they'll find them cleaned in the morning. Well, pip, pip! I must be popping. Time is money, you know, with us business men."

"Where are you going?" asked Mr. Brewster, suspiciously.

Archie breathed a sigh of ecstatic anticipation.

"I'm going over to the Ritz to get a bite to eat!" he said.

NEXT MONTH: "THE SAUSAGE CHAPPIE."

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"THE UNCROWNED KING OF ARABIA"

COLONEL T·E·LAWRENCE



THE MOST ROMANTIC CAREER OF MODERN TIMES.

By Lowell Thomas

III.

YOUNG Colonel Lawrence was like an actor playing a part during the war of liberation in the land of the Arabian Nights. The Bedouins never saw him excepting when he was at "top-notch." He cultivated the character of a man of mystery. He usually dressed in beautiful robes of pure white. In order that his garb should always look spotlessly clean he carried three or four special changes of raiment on an extra camel. He also made it a point to shave every day, although frequently they were dry shaves due to the scarcity of water.



COL. T. E. LAWRENCE.

It was always a mystery to me how Lawrence managed to keep as immaculate as he did in the desert, because baths are indeed a luxury in a land where there is not even enough water to drink. The only European things he ever had with him on the trek were a safety-razor, tooth-brush, and Colt revolver.

Colonel Lawrence never entered into competition with the Bedouins unless he was certain first that he could excel them. He made it a rule never to speak unless he had something special to say and unless he knew what he was talking about.

I once asked Lawrence why he always carried an old-style revolver instead of a new model. His reason was the best any man could offer, and in answering he told me the following story:—

"Some years ago when I was wandering about Asia Minor, near Marash, a fever came upon me. I was making my way towards the village of Birgik at the time and chanced to meet a Turkoman." Here he stopped to explain that Turkomans are a semi-nomadic branch of the Ottoman race with crooked eyes, and faces which look as though modelled in butter and then left out in the sun!

"I was not quite sure of my bearings," he continued, "and so I asked him to direct me. 'Right across those low hills on the left,' he replied. Just as I turned and started on my way he sprang up on my back and we had a bit of a dog-fight on the ground for a few minutes. I had already walked over a thousand miles during the previous months and was nearly done up. He was stronger than I, and eventually I was at the bottom and he was sitting on my stomach. Jerking this old Colt out of my robes he pressed it to my temple and pulled the trigger. The safety-catch was on, and his tugging did no good. Being a primitive

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fellow and knowing nothing about modern revolver mechanism, he threw it away in disgust and contented himself with pounding on my head with a rock until I was no longer interested in my surroundings. After taking everything I had he made off. A little later I recovered consciousness, went on to the village of Birgik, and described my experiences to the inhabitants. We eventually caught the Turkoman and made him disgorge. But ever since that occasion I have had a profound respect for this old revolver and am never without it."

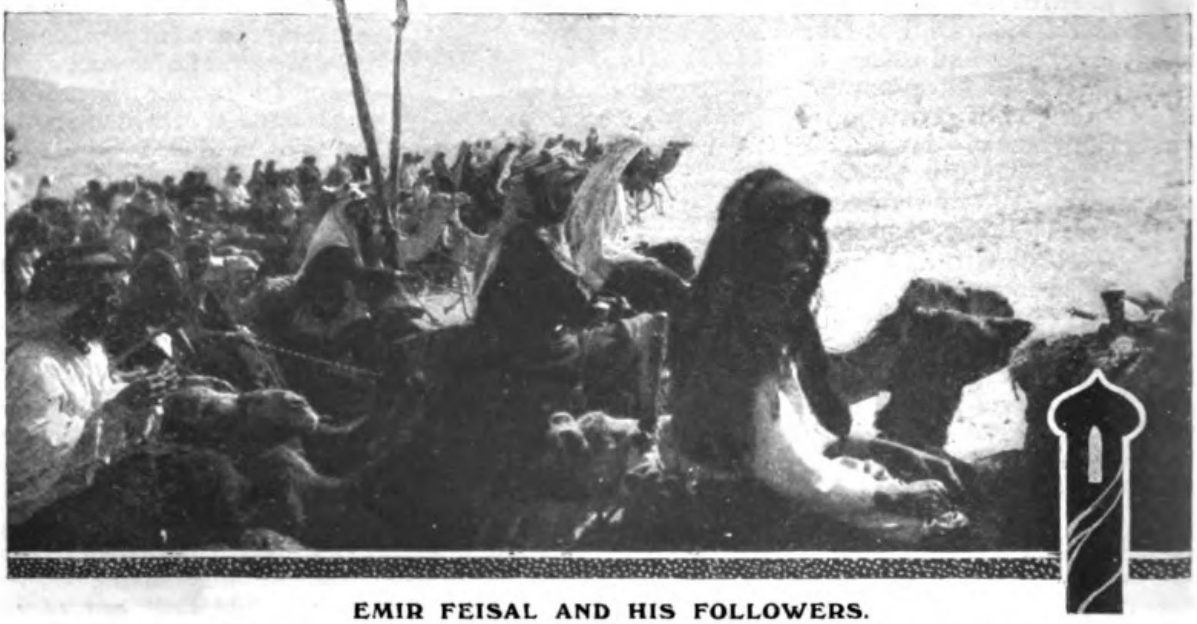
In all Lawrence's experiences with the Bedouins he never encountered a single case of treachery or double-dealing among the members of a tribe with which he once succeeded in establishing friendly relations. However, on one occasion when he had gone through the Turkish lines alone on a tour of inspection of the enemy fortifications, he called on the chieftain of the Beni Sakhi, a tribe which was co-operating with the Turks and Germans. This man broke the unwritten law of the desert and attempted to double-cross Lawrence while the latter was his guest. The sheikh sent a courier to the Turks, who were only ten miles distant, and meanwhile attempted to force Lawrence to remain in his tent. His intention was to turn his noted guest over to the Germans and Turks and claim the hundred thousand pounds reward which had been offered for his capture. However, Lawrence suspected treachery, and seizing an opportune moment he slipped out of the sheikh's tent and escaped on his racing camel.

To illustrate how inflexible is the unwritten law of Arabia, although that sheikh was a leader of a tribe at war with the Bedouins assisting Lawrence, his own relatives gave him a cup of poisoned coffee because he had been treacherous to a guest. The Beni Sakhi people felt that they had been disgraced by him. This idea of giving poison in coffee originated with the Turks, but has spread to the peoples on the edge of the desert.

While the Turk is a barbarian, the Bedouin-Arab is a gentleman, and takes no delight in torturing a victim. Although raiding is one of life's greatest joys to him, he is content with booty and abhors the sight of blood. Nomad-Arabs will rob, but rarely harm you.

The peoples of the desert are particularly proud of wearing clothing which they have forcibly taken from somebody else. Lawrence told me about an Englishman and his wife who went down from Damascus into the Lejah country north of Jebel Druz to explore. The people of the Lejah objected to having strangers prowling through their country, so they robbed the couple of everything they had. The explorer and his wife returned to Damascus garbed in a copy of the London *Times*. The lady wore the financial section!

Since the days of Mohammed, thirteen hundred years ago, fewer Europeans have visited Holy and Forbidden Arabia than have penetrated the jungles of Darkest Africa. The fanatical Mohammedans who inhabit the section of the desert which includes the holy cities of Mecca and Medina attempt to prevent all Christians and other



EMIR FEISAL AND HIS FOLLOWERS.

PRINCE FEISAL, THE NEWLY-RECOGNIZED RULER OF DAMASCUS AND ARAB-SYRIA, RIDING AT THE HEAD OF HIS TROOPS. THE EMIR IS GARBED IN PURE WHITE ROBES AND MAY BE SEEN DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF HIS STANDARD-BEARER.

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unbelievers from profaning its sacred soil with their presence. It is even forbidden in the Koran that strangers should enter Mecca and Medina.

That Lawrence was able to gain not only the confidence of the direct descendants of Mohammed, who have governed these forbidden cities of Arabia since the days of the Prophet, but also the confidence of the wild tribes of the desert, will stand out in history as one of the most remarkable and spectacular achievements of all time.



EMIR FEISAL AND COLONEL LAWRENCE HOLDING COURT IN THE DESERT.

EVERY MORNING AT TEN O'CLOCK THEY TRIED CASES OF EVIL EYE, CAMEL THEFT, AND DIVORCE.

The most amazing feature of Lawrence's accomplishment is the fact that he openly admitted that he was a Christian and never attempted to disguise himself as a native, except when he put a veil over his face and slipped through the Turkish lines dressed as a gipsy woman.

Our great-grandchildren will be as familiar with the name of Colonel T. E. Lawrence, the young Oxford archæologist who led the desert armies in the land of the Arabian Nights, as with the names of Ulysses, King Arthur, Sir Francis Drake, and other romantic figures of history and literature. To future generations he will be known as the English lad, just out of college, who made two kings—a ruler of Holy Arabia and a Prince of Syria. Even the imaginative geniuses who wrote those matchless gems of unbridled fancy, the tales of the "Thousand and One Nights," never dared invent a story so fantastic. There is little doubt that had it not been for young Lawrence, Hussein Ibn Ali, the aged Shereef of Mecca, would not be known as the King of the Hejaz to-day, nor would his son, the Emir Feisal, be the recognized Prince of Damascus and Arab-Syria.

Although great credit is due both to King Hussein and Prince Feisal for having led the Arabian nationalist movement and for having started the Arab revolution, neither of them had the uncanny skill and masterly diplomatic ability to carry out their original plan.

It was Lawrence who wiped out the century-old blood-feuds between the desert tribes. It was Lawrence who built up the Arabian Army. It was he who worked out the strategy of the campaign. It was he who outwitted the German and Turkish generals. It was Lawrence again who led the Arabs into battle. After Damascus was taken, it was he who entered the ancient Arabian capital of the Caliphs, and established a new Government for Prince Feisal, days before the latter arrived on the scene. In fact he was the moving spirit of the Arabian revolution.

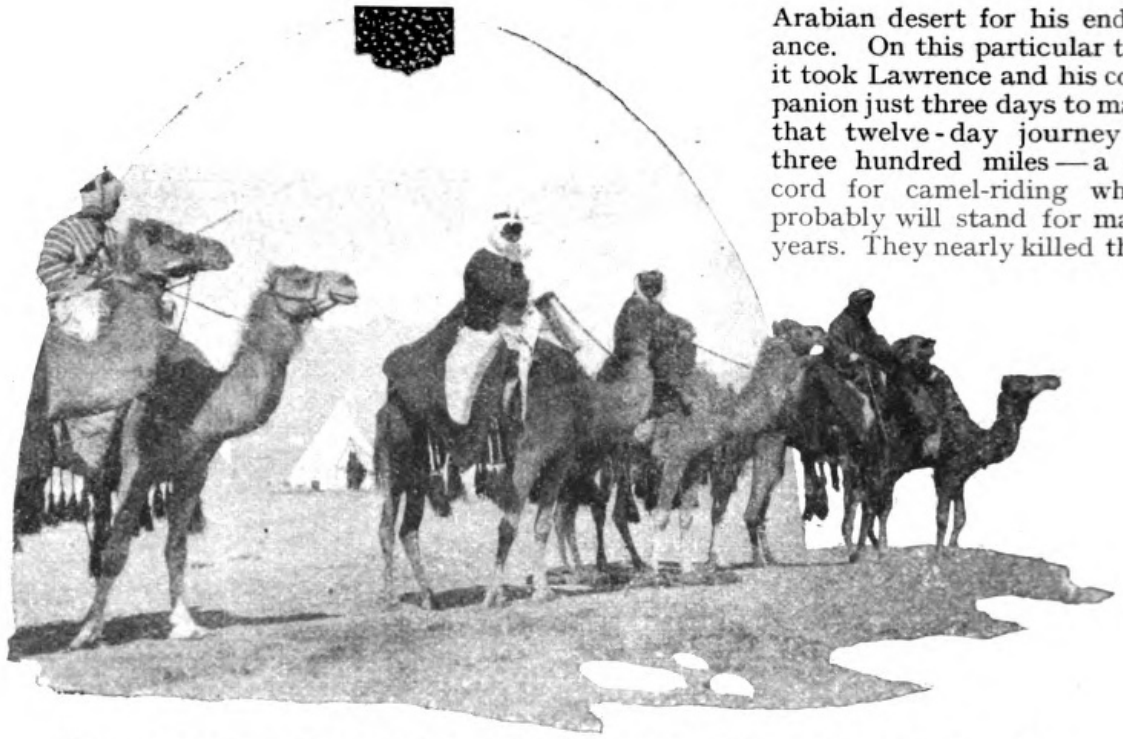
The amazing part of it all is that, though dealing with a people of an entirely different and older civilization than his own, he actually lived as an Arab, worked out his problems in true Arab manner, and outdid them from camel-riding to speaking their own language. The achievements of this modest young archæologist are unique. History offers no parallel. Not even Sir Richard Burton could have accomplished what Lawrence did. Burton knew the customs and the language just as well, but the great Arabian traveller and scholar was a cynic, and no cynic could have led King Hussein s wild horde of Bedouins.

What was the secret of Lawrence's success?

Old Auda Abu Tayi gave me the answer. Auda is the acme of everything Arabic and the most famous old warrior of the desert. "By the Beard of the Prophet," he roared, "this fair-haired son of Allah can do everything that we do even better than we do it ourselves. He has the face and hair of a Circassian beauty, the physique of an oryx (Arabian ibex), the courage of Abu Bekr, and the wisdom of Omar."

When Lawrence left the coast of Arabia

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COLONEL T. E. LAWRENCE AND A FEW OF HIS ARABIAN KNIGHTS.

THESE MEN WERE ALL GREAT CAMEL RIDERS, BUT NONE OF THEM COULD KEEP UP WITH THEIR FAIR-HAIRED ENGLISH LEADER, WHO ON ONE OCCASION COVERED THREE HUNDRED MILES BY CAMEL IN THREE DAYS.

and plunged into the desert he shed his European clothing and habit of mind and became a Bedouin. If you can get an Arab to laugh you can do almost anything you like with him. Although the nomads of Arabia have a keen sense of humour, their language has become so solemn and ceremonious that if one simply translates ordinary conversationa' English direct into Arabic it delights the desert peoples. Our everyday language is far more sparkling and to the point than theirs. To his ability to express his own subtle sense of humour in pure Arabic, Lawrence probably owes his life.

On one occasion when he was at Azrak, a village far out among the shifting sand-dunes, south-east of Damascus, a courier came with the news that a great caravan of Syrian merchants was on its way down to the Arab base port of Akaba, three hundred miles to the south. Realizing that there were sure to be many Turkish spies among the merchants in the caravan, Lawrence decided to try to reach Akaba ahead of it. The Arabs regard it as a twelve-days' journey from Azrak to Akaba by camel, and the Syrian merchants already had a start of nine days.

Only one Bedo among Lawrence's followers, a half-breed Haurani, could stand the latter's pace when he extended himself to the limit. The Haurani was famous in the North Arabian desert for his endurance. On this particular trek it took Lawrence and his companion just three days to make that twelve-day journey of three hundred miles — a record for camel-riding which probably will stand for many years. They nearly killed their camels and rode twenty-two hours each day, or a total of sixty-six out of seventy-two hours.

Eighty miles south of Azrak, Lawrence and the Haurani were racing across the ridges when suddenly a dozen mounted Arabs appeared over the edge of a sand-dune and rode down the slope at a gallop to cut them off. As they approached they shouted out that they were Jazi-Howeitats and friends. Thirty yards distant the strangers dismounted as a sign of encouragement for Lawrence and the Haurani to do the same, but the latter were on their guard and recognized the Arabs as Beni Sakhi, blood-enemies of all the Bedouins co-operating with King Hussein. They had heard that gold was passing up and down this route and were out for a bit of the loot.

A great trade route between Syria and Arabia had been opened up during the war, and merchants from Syria and Turkey passed back and forth through the lines to buy Manchester cotton from the British at Akaba. Lawrence himself had started this. He made two clever uses of cotton: first he used it as a means of spreading propaganda, and secondly for luring all the gold out of Syria and Turkey. The merchants of the Ottoman Empire would have sold their souls for cotton. That commodity had become so scarce that the Turkish military authorities allowed all

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merchants who paid them enough "baksheesh" to pass backwards and forwards through the lines. In Akaba, Lawrence's Arabs, camouflaged as shopkeepers, preached the Arab nationalist doctrines to the Syrian merchants, and filled them up to the eyes with tales of Allied victories which the latter carried home with their cotton and spread far and wide through the Ottoman Empire. Lawrence also induced the merchants to smuggle Zeiss field-glasses down from Constantinople, and he used them for equipping his army.

As the Beni Sakhi advanced with their rifles cocked, Lawrence laughed merrily. The brigands had meant to shoot him; but this unexpected merriment mystified them.

"Come near, I want to whisper in your ear," Lawrence remarked to their leader. Then, bending down from his saddle, he said: "Do you know what your name is?" The sheikh looked speechless and rather amazed, as Lawrence continued: "I think your name must be 'Terrace'!"

In Arabia the most terrible of all insults is to call a Bedouin "Terrace." It is the vilest epithet ever used by one man towards another, and usually is followed by bloodshed. We have no word in the English language which compares with it. The Beni Sakhi was dumbfounded and visibly nervous. What he could not understand was why any ordinary traveller would dare say such a thing to him in the open desert, with all the odds against him.

Before the sheikh recovered from the shock, Lawrence added, pleasantly, "May Allah give you peace!" and, calling to his Haurani, swung off across the sand. The robbers, puzzled and bewildered, stood motionless until the two had ridden a hundred yards or so. Then they seemed to suddenly recover their senses and started blazing away with their rifles. But Lawrence and his companion ga'loped over the nearest ridge and escaped.

The members of Lawrence's personal bodyguard were chosen for their courage and endurance. No Bedo was accepted who could not ride both day and night if necessary. It was regarded as quite the swell thing to belong to the select band of picked men who dogged the heels of the blue-eyed, fair-haired young shereef. Lawrence never chose more than two Bedos from one tribe. His theory was that tribal jealousy would thus prevent them from plotting against him. He also paid them more than the other Arab troops, and they spent every sovereign on fine clothes. There were eighty Bedouins in the bodyguard, and they looked like an Oriental flower-garden as they bounced along on their camels behind Lawrence. Every one of them was a famous fighting man, and they were always ready to dash off with Lawrence on a raid at a moment's notice. He frequently sent them through the Turkish lines as spies. There was at least one representative of every corner of the great Arabian desert in this polyglot organization.



COLONEL LAWRENCE AND HIS BEDOUIN FOLLOWERS READY TO START ON A RAID.

EIGHTY PICKED ARABS ACCOMPANIED THE YOUNG ARCHÆOLOGIST ON ALL HIS WILDEST EXPEDITIONS. ALTHOUGH EVERY BEDOUIN WARRIOR WANTED TO JOIN LAWRENCE'S BODYGUARD, ONLY TWO MEN WERE SELECTED FROM EACH TRIBE.

Second in command to Lawrence was a pock-marked, undersized, fiery little Bedouin named Abdullah. He knew no fear and would take on ten times his number with keen delight. He was a little dried-up stick of a man, but one of the most chivalrous and daring descendants of Ishmael who ever rode a camel. It was his boast that he had served under every prince in the desert, and had also been imprisoned and

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beaten by every one of them. That was his greatest joy!

Abdullah was a valuable lieutenant to Lawrence, for many reasons. His speciality was handling men and camels. Lawrence usually urged on his followers by fantastic rewards, such as beautiful clothes, gold, jewels, and silver-mounted rifles. If they failed, Abdullah rewarded them with a sound beating.

Lawrence found it no easy matter to punish a Bedo. You can hardly imprison a man on his camel. One favourite form of punishment in Arabia is to chuck a short dagger at a man's head. The result usually is merely a heavy, though very painful, scalp wound, which heals in a week or two. Bedouins who break the unwritten law of the desert frequently punish themselves in this way, and then, with blood streaming down their faces, appear before the person wronged and crave pardon.

One rather curious custom in Arabia is that of permitting a murderer to pay damages to the relatives, if the latter are willing to accept gold or camels. But if the murderer is caught he is usually killed. If he avoids capture, nevertheless, sooner or later, he must pay for his deed, because it is next to impossible for a desert dweller to escape all penalty unless he gives up his nomad life and flees to a far-off corner of Arabia and becomes a townsman. Since Bedouins regard all human beings who live cramped up in villages and cities as scum of the earth, very few of them ever lower themselves that far. They regard death as preferable to such degradation.

A peculiar feature of the unwritten law of the desert is that no distinction is drawn between accidental and intentional manslaughter. If one Bedo kills another by accident, now, as in the days of Abraham, it is customary for him to flee and send back explanations by courier.

During a raid on the Turkish railway a member of Lawrence's bodyguard climbed into the railway station through a window. He evidently attempted to open the door from the inside. But meanwhile some of his companions were attempting to batter it down from without, and one fired his rifle through a panel. When the door at last gave way the chap who had entered through the window was found dead. The Arab who had fired the shot bolted through the crowd, jumped on his horse, and galloped off.

"It really is a shame we must kill him!" said the members of the Colonel's bodyguard, referring to the fugitive. "It was an accident, and the dead man was a worthless scamp, anyhow." So they all chipped in together and made up a fund of one hundred and twenty pounds. This they sent to the relatives of the dead man, and they accepted it with evident pleasure.

A man's worth in the desert is rated at from a hundred to two hundred and fifty pounds in gold. Good camels are worth much more than that. Shereefs, of course, have a greater blood value than ordinary people. Thus, if you kill a descendant of the Prophet you have to pay four times as much as for an ordinary man. It is practically impossible to avoid paying less than a thousand pounds for killing a shereef, and one cannot arrange this little question of price before committing the deed.

Feuds arise in Arabia far worse than the Hatfield-McCoy feud in Kentucky. Different tribes take pot-shots at one another every time they meet. These sanguinary quarrels sometimes drag on for centuries. Lawrence believed that the best way to unify the desert people and wipe out their terrible blood-feuds would be to create an Arabian aristocracy. Nothing of that kind had ever existed in Arabia before, because the nomads of the Near East are the freest peoples on earth. The Bedouin has always refused to recognize any authority higher than himself. But all Arabs have for centuries had a certain extra respect for direct descendants of the founder of their religion. Taking advantage of this, Lawrence succeeded in persuading them to recognize their shereefs as chosen people. But I am sure he would never have accomplished this feat if he had not had the unlimited financial support of the British Government. Through Lawrence's hands a stream of over a million dollars in gold poured into Arabia each month. This enabled the young archæologist to pay King Hussein's Arabian army. But gold alone would not have sufficed, for the Turks and Germans tried it and failed. Though the Arab's love for gold is great, his hatred for the Turk is far greater.

Since the beginning of time the sheikhs, or patriarchs, of one tribe have had absolutely no influence with members of other tribes. Shereefs, on the other hand, who can hardly be said to belong to any tribe, were recognized as leaders by the townspeople of Mecca, Medina, and the few other large places. In order to carry out this plan for widening the influence of the shereefs, and making Hussein the recognized ruler of the Hejaz, Lawrence had first to win the confidence of all the rival tribes. We have seen how he did this by excelling them in the things in which they themselves excel. Then, quietly, in such a manner as to make them think the ideas were their own creation, he succeeded in convincing them that they should forget all past tribal

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differences and unite under the leadership of Hussein and his sons and the other shereefs in order to drive out the hated Turk and restore the Caliphate and former splendour of their ancient empire.

The word "shereef" (or "shrf," as spelled in Arabic, a language without vowels) means 'honour." A shereef is supposed to be a man who exercises honour. In the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, Shereef Hussein and Shereef Feisal had long stood high in the esteem of the town Arabs, who have been accustomed to refer to them as "Sidi" or "Lord." But the care-free Bedouins, unlike their city cousins, merely addressed them as 'Hussein" and "Feisal," without bothering about titles. Lawrence with his magic power of persuasion, backed up by an endless stream of British gold, convinced even the Bedouins that they should adopt the term "Sidi" in referring to shereefs. So successful was he that within a few months, although they knew he was a hated Christian, they honoured Lawrence with this title simply because of their profound admiration for him.



COLONEL LAWRENCE (ON LEFT) AND MR. LOWELL THOMAS IN ARABIAN COSTUME.

The fact that the shereefs had always been treated with special deference by townsmen and villagers had caused them to grow up with a sense of their own superior responsibility and honour. That, of course, was of great assistance to Lawrence in creating a new aristocracy. In fact, if they had not had that sense of personal responsibility he never would have succeeded in unifying the tribes, because he would have had no men capable of acting as subordinates under the King and Prince Feisal.

When two Arabs meet they greet each other by slapping hands instead of gripping, as we do. Then each makes a movement as though touching his feet, followed by an upward wave touching the heart, mouth, and head with the right hand. At times they kiss both cheeks in European fashion. A town Arab shows respect for a shereef by kissing his hand, but the independent Bedouin has too much respect for himself to indulge in such servile osculation.

It is considered a great disgrace in Arabia to kiss anyone's feet. Neither the townsman nor the nomad ever kisses the feet of another person except when begging for his life. On one occasion some fifty Turkish officers grovelled in the sand at Lawrence's feet. A few moments before he had touched off a "tulip" under their train and his bodyguard had charged down on the coaches yelling like mad. The Turks were afraid the Arabs were going to kill them.

If an Arab has you down and is about to kill you, Lawrence once told me a magic password which you can always say to save your life. It is the word "dakhilak." During my stay in Arabia I was treated with sweeping courtesy and lavish hospitality and never had occasion to use it. But if an Arab has you at his mercy, and you say "dakhilak" he must let you go, because it means—"I am in your tent and at your coffee-hearth as your guest," or one might translate it as, "I have taken refuge with you." If you are in a man's tent as his guest in Arabia, he is in honour bound to see that no harm befalls you. Syrians use the word interchangeably with another word meaning "please." To the Bedouin this latter use of it is a ghastly and inexcusable breach of etiquette.

"I have never had an Arab say the word to me," remarked the Colonel, "merely because I have never had one of them at my mercy whom I contemplated killing."

In describing the principal difference between his Bedouin followers and the Arab villager, Lawrence explained that the Bedo is a nomad and a pure type, much

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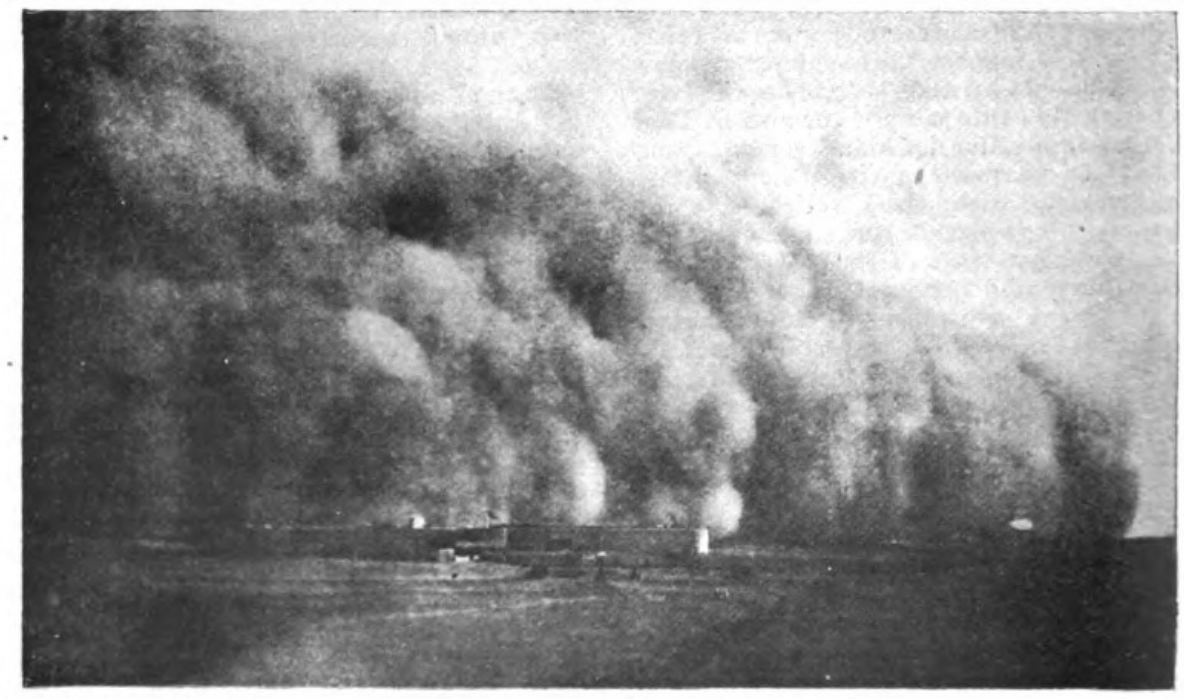
the same to-day as three thousand years ago in the time of Abraham. The townsmen, however, are a mixture of all the peoples of the East. The nomad is a poet, a sportsman, and a lover of personal liberty. The villager is indolent, dirty, untrustworthy, and absolutely mercenary.

"The pure Arab of the desert belongs to a race which built some of the first civilization," he said. "They had a philosophy and a literature when the natives of the British Isles were savages. They are one of the few peoples of the world whom the Romans failed to conquer. They are forced to lead a nomadic existence because they must follow their herds from place to place in search of grass and water. They are wanderers on the face of the earth, creatures who follow the camels across the shifting sand-dunes, who sleep under the skies, and who live as their forefathers lived thousands of years before Christ. Morally they are more civilized than we are. Materially they are savages. They believe that a man cannot be free unless he lives in the desert and can put all his belongings in his saddle-bags."

Lawrence is one of the few, if not the only European who has been entirely successful in transforming himself into a Bedouin. During the war about thirty British officers attempted to penetrate into the desert and live the life of an Arab nomad. Nearly all came back but Lawrence. Perhaps the principal difficulty with the others was that they tried to be English "up-country." We can hardly blame them! But the man who takes a can of bully-beef with him when he goes into Arabia will never pass as a native.

Lawrence's irregular Arab army had no commissariat department. Whenever they started off on an expedition each man carried a small bag of flour and a little coffee. Every meal was the same, and the whole army lived on doughy, unleavened bread made in the ashes of a fire. Although his Arabs could gulp down a pound or two at a time, Lawrence had to carry a chunk of the stuff in the folds of his gown and nibble at it as he rode along in order to keep from wrecking his internal mechanism. While trekking across the desert this remarkable young Englishman would sit in his camel-saddle reading Aristophanes in the original while gnawing away at a hunk of tough Arab bread.

Whenever Lawrence went off to Cairo or to Allenby's headquarters in Palestine, on his return he usually found that Emir Feisal had been forced to put all the members of his bodyguard in prison. No one else



A GREAT SANDSTORM SWEEPING OVER A DESERT VILLAGE.

THESE STORMS WERE CALLED "HUBOOBS," AND IN THEIR APPROACH THEY LOOKED LIKE MOVING MOUNTAIN RANGES. COLONEL LAWRENCE AND HIS FOLLOWERS HAD TO FIGHT THESE STORMS AS WELL AS TURKS AND GERMANS.

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could handle "Lawrence's devils," as they were called. On one occasion he returned from Egypt anxious to start immediately on a secret expedition into the "blue." As usual, he found his men in the lock-up, and among them two of his most daring followers, Ferraj and Daoud. When he sent for Sheikh Yussef, the civil governor of Akaba, and asked what had happened, Yussef laughed and then he cursed and then he laughed again.



LAWRENCE'S ARABS ON THE MARCH.

EVERY SOLDIER IN THE ARABIAN ARMY WAS PAID WITH BRITISH GOLD. THIS THEY SPENT ON BEAUTIFUL CLOTHING AND ON SCENT, WHICH THEY POURED OVER THEMSELVES BY THE BOTTLEFUL. ON THE TREK THEY BOUNCED ALONG BEHIND LAWRENCE LIKE AN ORIENTAL FLOWER GARDEN.

'I had a beautiful white camel," said he, "and one night she strayed away. The next morning, hearing a great commotion in the street, I rushed out and found everyone in the Bazaar district laughing uproariously at a camel whose legs had been dyed blue with indigo and whose head had been coloured red with henna. I recognized it as mine. Your varlets, Ferraj and Daoud, were found at the beach washing red and blue dye from their arms. Of course, they denied all knowledge of the affair."

It took nearly three months for the dye to wear off, before Yussef could use this camel again.

Occasionally Lawrence would take some of the members of his bodyguard to Cairo or to Allenby's headquarters in Palestine. They invariably paraded around bristling with pistols and daggers, causing much excitement and uneasiness wherever they went. On one occasion Abdullah visited General Headquarters near Ramleh with his master. While Lawrence was in conference with Allenby, Abdullah "went off on his own" to have a look round. Six hours passed and he failed to return. Then Lawrence received a telephone message from the A.P.M. stating that he had arrested the fiery little Arab because he looked as though he might be prowling around waiting for a chance to take a pot-shot at the "C.-in-C." The A.P.M. said that Abdullah had explained through an interpreter that he was one of "Sidi" Lawrence's "sons," and had demanded an apology for having been arrested. He declined to accept any ordinary apology, and insisted that it must be made in a special ceremonial way. "In the meantime," added the A.P.M., with a wail, "he sits here eating up all our oranges! We wish you would call him off!"

Eventually Lawrence had to make special arrangements with General Allenby so that his gorgeously-robed brigands could carry their weapons in Cairo and Jerusalem without fear of arrest or bloodshed. They were, indeed, a comic-opera crew, and nearly all of them used a kohl (antimony) stick under their eyes to darken them and rouge on their lips. I also noticed that they were very fond of scent. They poured whole bottles of it on their clothing, and were as fragrant as the ladies of a harem. In Cairo they spent most of their time flirting with the veiled Egyptian beauties and buying richly-brocaded robes.

It was a familiar saying among the members of Lawrence's bodyguard that they might as well spend their gold on clothes and having a good time, because they were likely to be killed any day. Their blond English leader was constantly sending them on dangerous missions, and there were far more casualties among them than among the other organizations of the Arab army.

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Every man in King Hussein's forces was anxious to belong to Lawrence's body-guard. This was mainly because he took them along on all his raids, bridge-blowing parties, and train-wrecking expeditions. There is nothing a Bedouin loves so much as he loves thrills. Nearly every Bedo in the desert would go half-way across Arabia for a chance to bag a bit of loot.

On the trek Lawrence's men rode behind him in a long irregular column. There was always a poet at either end of the line who made up verses as they swung across the sands. First the poet at the rear end of the column would make up a verse and each man in the line would invent one to rhyme with it. Usually the subjects were topical, such as each other's love-affairs, or "Sidi" Feisal or "Sidi" Lawrence. They also had some fine war-songs or chants, which when sung would cause the camels to put their heads down and go at a faster pace. One of the songs which they sang about Lawrence was entitled: "I wish he would pay us another pound a month." Or perhaps they would make up one on the spur of the moment, the theme of which would be: "I wonder if Allah has seen the headcloth Sidi Lawrence is wearing? It is no good, he should give it to me." As a matter of fact, every "kaffieh" and "agal" (headcloth) that Lawrence wore was more gorgeous than anything they had ever seen before, and his playful followers, like children, wanted them.

The adventurous "bloods" who always accompanied the fair-haired young Anglo-Bedouin Shereef had a rough game which they took keen delight in playing. Whenever one Bedo fell asleep in the saddle, another would charge his camel straight at him on the gallop and knock him off.

Intimate friendships sprang up among Lawrence's personal followers. Ferraj and Daoud, the chaps who dyed Sheikh Yussef's camel, were inseparable pals, and when Daoud died of fever at Akaba during the latter part of the campaign, Ferraj felt so miserable and lonely that he committed suicide by dashing headlong into the Turkish lines on his camel during an engagement.

Lawrence was accompanied, as a rule, by two or three body-servants. They were slaves loaned by King Hussein. No Christian is permitted to have any slaves of his own in Holy Arabia.

I paid particular attention to the topics of conversation when Lawrence was in company with a group of Arabs. Although they frequently asked him questions regarding his own country, he invariably led the conversation back to local Arab affairs. He scrupulously avoided drawing comparisons between European and Arabian ways, and he seemed to have an insatiable desire to learn as much information about the peoples and parts of the country he was in as possible.

Lawrence also made an exhaustive study of camels. Nothing is more certain to give an outsider influence among the wild tribes of Arabia than a thorough knowledge of the animal which plays so prominent a part in their lives. The camel really is an animal of mystery. Even the Bedouins who breed them are unable to fathom all their good and bad qualities. And Colonel Lawrence certainly is the only European who has succeeded in developing what we might call "the camel instinct."

The finest camels in the world come from the oases of Central Arabia. There are just six different kinds. All Arabian camels are dromedaries and have but one hump. In fact, I have never met a Bedouin who has ever even heard of the two-humped camel which is found only in Asia, north-west of Persia. The two-humped camel is slow and of little use except as a beast of burden. The word "dromedary," by the way, is unknown to the Arab, and is a Greek term, meaning "a camel that runs."

Even after seven years of life in the Arabian desert and extensive study, Lawrence confessed to me that he could not always judge a camel correctly. Abdullah, commanding officer of his bodyguard, and old Auda Abu Tayi, the Bedouin Robin Hood, are among the foremost authorities on camels.

"In judging a camel," Lawrence explained to me one day, when he was buying a new mount, "among the things to be considered are length of belly, the way the animal lifts its foot, the way it carries its head, depth of neck, length of the front leg, length of front and back shoulders, girth, and shape of hump. A small waist and a long leg are particularly desirable. But the hump is of paramount importance. It should consist of hard muscle and not fat. A camel actually seems to live on its hump. If worked too hard the hump gradually disappears and the animal dies. If a camel has no hump, or a low one or a thin one or a fat one, it is a sure sign that it will break down under any ordinary strain.

"A camel's age is judged by its teeth in much the same way as a horse's age is established. They usually live up to about twenty-five years of age, but are in their prime between four and fourteen. Good Arabian camels can trot up to twenty-two miles an hour on good ground. They can canter up to twenty-eight miles an hour, and gallop up to thirty-two. Ordinary speed for a long journey of many days across the desert is only about four and a

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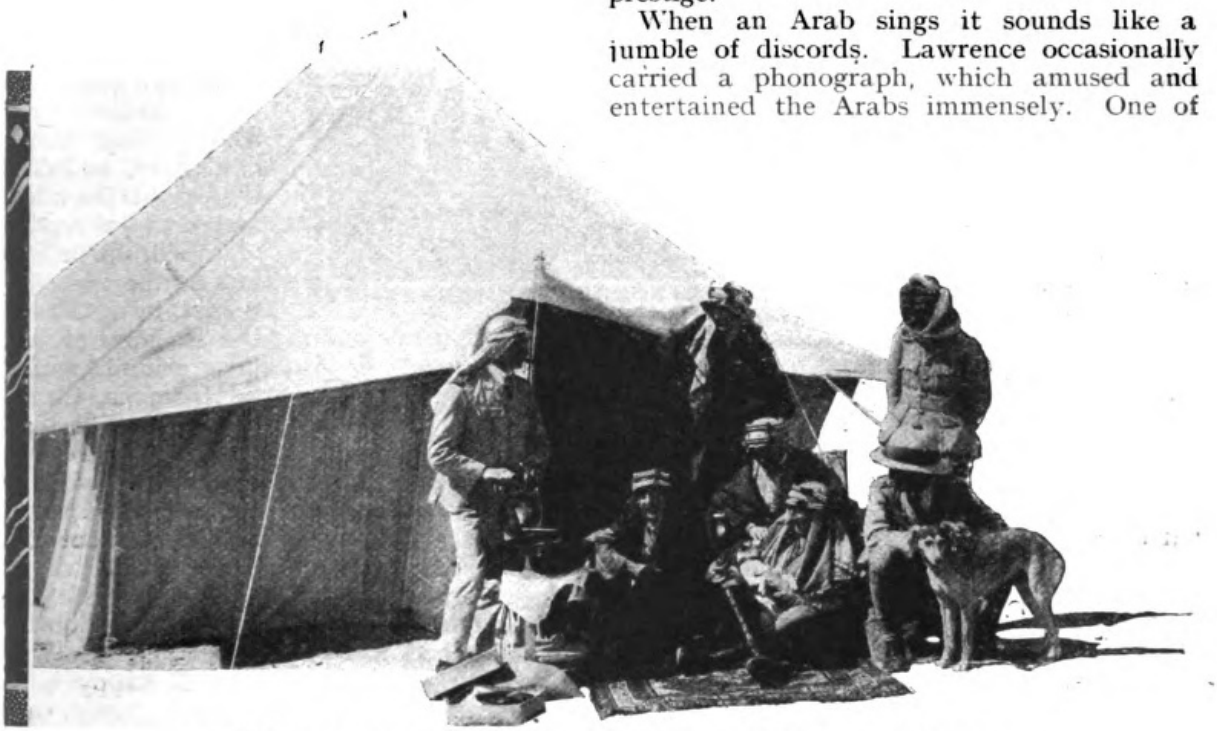
half miles per hour. If you want to make a trip of many hundreds of miles, never let your camel go at a faster gait than a walk. For a single day's journey, a jog-trot at seven miles an hour is the safest speed.

"A good camel walks in absolute silence. It is a particularly desirable trait and of great assistance to the Bedouins when they are making night raids. They teach their camels to not even whine, and a long caravan may pass within twenty yards of your tent without disturbing your sleep."

Although the Bedouins usually own sheep as well as camels, they rarely kill them except when they have guests, Lawrence informed me on another occasion. An Arab shepherd passed our tent one day near Petra, the rose-red city of Edom. The sheep had thick curly coats as beautiful as Persian fleece, and little horns that curved back over their dainty heads.

When Lawrence asked him how much he wanted for one, the shepherd replied five pounds gold, double the prevailing rate. Lawrence handed over the sovereigns without a murmur, although the Bedo expected to be bargained with, and would have sold for much less. But Lawrence and his associates made it a rule never to bargain with a native. In that way they led the Arabs to believe they possessed untold wealth, which of course increased their prestige.

When an Arab sings it sounds like a jumble of discords. Lawrence occasionally carried a phonograph, which amused and entertained the Arabs immensely. One of his Scotch sergeants at Akaba brought an assortment of musical instruments out from Cairo and organized a band. He taught them "Annie Laurie," "Auld Lang Syne," and "Tipperary," and wrote an Arab National Anthem for them. That band practised every day. Every instrument was out of tune, and every man played in a different minor key. Lawrence and his associates usually disappeared on a fishing trip among the coral reefs whenever the Arab band got under way.



LAWRENCE AND A GROUP OF HIS BROTHER OFFICERS.

THEY WERE FORCED TO WEAR ARAB HEADDRESS TO KEEP FROM BEING SHOT BY THE NATIVES, WHO OBJECT TO EUROPEAN HATS

THE NEXT INSTALMENT.

Next month Mr. Lowell Thomas tells us of Colonel Lawrence's experiences with the wildest Bedouin tribe in Arabia, known as the Howeitat. This account of the adventures of the young Oxford archæologist with Auda Abu Tayi and his wild tribesmen is more fascinating than the fables of "The Arabian Nights."

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MURPHY'S MUMMY

A Mystery Story

BY

D. WOOSTER TAYLOR

ILLUSTRATED BY J. HENRY

MURPHY tiptoed into the room and closed the door behind him, releasing the knob carefully to avoid a click. I was on the point of giving him a cheery "Halloa, Murph!" when I noticed his stockinged feet.

"Sit down," I said, unconsciously dropping my voice to a whisper.

He came forward quietly and placed his hat on my desk. On top of it he put his night stick, and hung his belt over the back of a chair.

"Shoes?" I queried, as though expecting them to follow.

He shook his head.

"Left them outside," he explained, indicating the hall. "My feet hurt."

There was a finality in his tone that checked further inquiry. I invited him to stretch out on the lounge and take a little nap, promising to awaken him in time to "report in" to the station.

"Sleep!" he protested. "I'll not close my eyes *this* night! I'm done with the museum, the mummies, and the whole bunch. I don't like it."

I looked at him in amazement. Murphy, of all men, to be ill-natured and nervous. The lack of a smile was as puzzling as the absence of his shoes.

"Murphy," I concluded aloud, "you must be ill."

"No——" he hesitated, "unless I'll be comin' down with a bit of painter's colic. I've been touchin' up the home, you know, against the dear wife's return from the hospital; and the odour of it got me a trifle doin' the kitchen ceilin'. But—— What was that?"

"Wind," I replied. "It's blowing a gale outside, straight from the beach. This old shack rattles like the bones of our dinosaur up there in the gallery."

"Bones," muttered Murphy, shifting to the edge of his chair. "There's nothin' but bones in the whole place, seems to me. There's dead birds in one room, and dead snakes in the other, and crawlin' reptiles cramped up in fruit jars as though crying to get out. There's the skeleton of that poor grinnin' gorilla, for instance, clingin' to a post like some drownin' devil lost at sea. I can figure you standin' it by day, Mr. Curator, but why, in the name of sense, you'll sit up workin' at your desk all hours of the night in this zoological graveyard, is beyond me. It's a tomb, I'm tellin' you, and they're not all happy in it, either!"

"Not happy?" I glanced up at him in surprise. "What do you mean?"

"Exactly that, Mr. Curator. They're restless."

"Do you mean the *employés*? Another rise?"

"No, not thim," said Murphy. "They're content."

"Well, then?" I demanded, swinging around in my chair and facing him.

Murphy leaned forward.

"Pass me the makin's, Mr. Curator," he said, "and I'll—I'll tell you what I"—he glanced at the door—"what I saw not a moment ago with my own eyes, and I'm no liar."

I passed him my pouch and papers, a luxury I indulged in when the dignity of a cigar or propriety of a pipe was not required. Murphy spilled out tobacco enough to have filled the great Turkish pipe above my desk, and at that made a pitifully thin cigarette. He stood up, brushed the mixture from his knees, and drew his chair close to mine, but facing the closed door that led to the main gallery.

"I was makin' my rounds," he began,

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without further preliminary, "carryin' the clectric torch as usual, Mr. Curator. I'd been worryin' a bit over putting light blue in the new baby's room, when folks tell me it should have been pink for a girl. There was nothin' else on my mind. All was well among the statuary. I flashed my light on old King Saul's marble whiskers, admirin' him as I do for that fine fightin' face of his, and took another look at the young Greek lad throwin' the what's-its-name. He looked cauld. They all did, for that matter. Even thim with clothes on seemed to be wrappin' their stone drapes around them against the draught. I passed under the arch of one of your heathen tombs into the Indian room, makin' my usual investigation behind the canoe by the door and findin' no one hidin' there, as usual. The wind rustled the blankets a bit on the walls, but there was nothin' to worry about. By the way—the rats are gettin' into your stuffed chief. I threw my stick at one, but he escaped me. On recoverin' my club, I wint into the art gallery adjoinin'. She was there—my favourite one, with more hair than judgment—and fewer clothes.

"'Poor dear!' says I to myself. 'Still clutchin' the babe to your breast. I'll take my light off your shamed face, but I'd like to find the man that done it.' There was plenty of them smirkin' there on the walls that looked guilty. Fine gentlemen with masterful ways to deceive any poor girl. Art's a queer thing, Professor, and I bet the painters themselves put in many a secret they never intend to tell. They're always rubbin' out and paintin' over again in a hurry, I've noticed."

"If that's what is worrying you, Murphy," I interrupted, "cheer up. Don't grieve over the plight of that painted lady, who, in reality, is a most contented and respectable model. The baby isn't hers. It was rented by the artist from his laundress."

"Hush!" protested Murphy. "It's not that."

The look I had seen when he first entered the room came back to his face. He went on in a hurried whisper, glancing now and then at my office clock, which was nearing one.

"I passed through the second and third gallery—the pioneer room, the jewel room. I noticed then, when I flashed it on the cases, that my light was gettin' a bit dim. 'I'll have a new battery in the morning,' says I to myself. From there I went through the antique furniture and upstairs to the natural history. I was high on the top gallery, standin' right back of the wounded buffalo, when I thought I heard a noise. 'Wind,' says I, payin' no heed, but takin' the precaution to unbutton my coat so the gun would be handy. I stood still, and it came again—a faint, tappin' noise, like a woman's hand smoothin' the pillow after makin' the bed and turnin' down the top sheet."

"Or a rat's tail hitting the floor," I laughed.

"Wait!" Murphy ordered. "Wait till I tell you the rest. It's nearin' one o'clock, and I'll have to hurry on to my next round, but I'll finish first. It was no common sound. I know thim all in this place like Patereski knows his notes—rats gnawin', mice sneakin' around, doors creakin', an Indian bow swingin' in a draught. I know the sound the water makes when the heater pipes are coolin' off, the trees rubbin' against the back of the building, and every moan and groan and creak and crack that's natural to the old place itself or the things that's in it. This was a strange sound. I've been here six months, and I've never heard its like.

"I stood there, sayin' to myself: 'Murphy, you fool, it's nothin'.' At first I couldn't place it. It seemed to come somewhere from below, and still it was close to me. One tap, strong like, and thin several little ones, as though the woman's hand was being imitated by the child at her elbow. On my toes I slipped over to the gallery rails and peered down. The moon was up, as you can see there through the window, Professor, and a streak of it was in the main hall, lightin' the arms of your giant devilfish hangin' there. It was still—the sort of stillness that makes you want to yell out and yet turns you so fearful you can't take a deep breath. I stood there, and put my eyes and ears to every corner.

"'Tap—tap, tap, tap!' it came again.

"'If you're behind the bull moose,' said I, half aloud, drawin' my gun, 'you'll come out.' But there was nothin' there. I searched among the cases, from your two-headed calf at one end to the man-eatin' shark at the other. If I'd known thin what I do now I'd have wasted no time among dead beasts and insects, but my ideas were simple. 'Perhaps a loose bone of the gorilla,' thought I, 'swingin' on a wire against his naked ribs.' But no, I tried thim all.

"Thin a thought struck me, and I started downstairs for the jewel room in a hurry.

"'Murphy,' said I to myself, 'you've never had a robbery in this museum. There's a fortune in jewels here, and any rogue that wants can come in durin' the day and get the lay of the land. He might hide himself away thin, or effect an entrance at night. What's easier than to pry open one of those old-fashioned window locks and step in? Right now he's got a chisel under the lid of the case that holds the jewelled crown of old Queen Something-or-other, and is tappin'

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"'HIST!' SAID MURPHY. 'I SAW THE THING GOIN' BACK—THE THING THAT LAY AGAINST MY FACE A MOMENT BEFORE.'"

it with a rubber mallet. His sack is half full already, and while you're creepin' around like a superstitious idiot he'll finish the job—and leave you to face the chief in the mornin', and the commissioners at night, with a fine story, indeed.'

"Well, I lost no time. As I crossed the main hall I tried my light, under my coat. It was no stronger than the glow of a dying match, but I figured I'd be better without it, feelin' sure the thief would be workin' with one of his own."

"Why didn't you switch on the lights and——" I interrupted myself. "Oh, yes! I remember. They're putting in a new circuit in that wing."

"They are," said Murphy. "And I thought to myself that the thief probably knew it, too; and that was one reason for him pickin' this night for his little game. Well, at the threshold of the pioneer room I took my shoes off, sittin' down on the floor. I was just gettin' up when I heard the noise again—four taps, this time, one long and three short. I remained on my hands and knees, listenin'. It was in the jewel room and no mistake. My courage, if I have any, Professor, came back to me.

"'Murph!' said I to myself, 'you're fightin' a flesh-and-blood man now—you know where you stand. He's a plain burglar stealin' jewels. Go in and get him.'

"I got up and wint in. It was pitch dark. If I hadn't known the exact position of every case I would have struck sumpthin', but I made straight down the centre carpet, step by step, like a cat. 'If he moves,' thought I, 'or shows the flash of his light, I'll get him quick.' Perhaps three paces away from the case that holds the old Queen's jewels I stopped.

"'Tap—tap, tap, tap!' He was there, workin' under the stand table. My gun was cocked and my spirit was up. I couldn't see a thing, but I thought I'd bluff him.

"'Out of it, or I'll blow your blankety-blank head off!' I hissed. 'I've got a bead on you, crouchin' there. Crawl out on the other side and lay on your face before I kill you.'

"There was no answer, but for a minute I thought I heard him crawlin'. There was a faint noise like a hand rubbin' over a table.

"'Crawl out!' I called again, 'or I'll shoot you where you lay.'

"Nothin' doin', except that the scrapin' continued. 'Sneakin' on all fours to the mummy room, is he?' thought I. 'Well, I'll ambush him.' From where I was standin' the door was less than a dozen steps. The moon was shinin' faintly through the skylight there and I could make out the cases against the walls, with the mummies in 'em; but there was only a streak of greyish light across the floor, no wider than my hand here.

"Makin' no sound, I shifted over until I felt the edge of the long case containin' the jades, and from there it was easy to guide myself to the doorway. Pressin' my back against the casin', I waited. If the rogue

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came crawlin' or tiptoein' through that doorway he'd pass within arm's length of me, I reasoned, and, dark as it was, and no matter how stealthily he moved, he couldn't get by me at such close quarters. I had my gun all ready to shoot down or up, as the case might be. As I waited, still as the mummies in the next room, the noise kept gettin' closer. The nearer it got, the less I could make it out. 'His shoe-lace is untied and draggin' behind him on the marble floor,' was my first thought. 'No!' said I again, 'he's got on moccasins, borrowed from the Indian room.' I wished, when I thought of my own stockin' feet, that I'd done the same.

"Of a sudden the sound was within three feet of me, but still I could see nothin'. I strained my eyes in the blackness. It was like ink. 'I'll shoot,' thinks I, 'but where?' The sound was almost at my feet. I stepped straight out into the doorway, spreadin' my legs a bit. I'm a big man, Mr. Curator, and no one could have squeezed by me."

He paused.

"Well?" I said.

Murphy leaned over and laid his big, muscular hand heavily on my arm.

"Well," he said, "someone or sumpthin' did! I stood blockin' the door with my shoulders, arms, and legs, a cocked revolver in my hand, and it got by. Sumpthin', light as the trailin' hair of a woman, crept slowly across my foot. It struck my toes first, and travelled up my instep, and wrapped itself for half a second around my ankle.

"Jumpin' back, I swung my gun to the floor, but I didn't fire. Even as I jumped, the thing, a different part of it, was in my face. It brushed my cheek first, and I struck it back. It came on again, not hard or rough-like—I wish to God it had been!—but light and soft, rubbin' against my lips and nose like the wet tongue of a dog. Cauld and soft as that, but not wet. With my empty hand I struck it back again. There was no resistance. It faded away at my first touch, but was back in a second, rubbin' its terrible cheek against my own—nestlin' on my shoulder—caressin' my ear with its dry, silklike face. Every minute I expected it to whisper sumpthin'—to put some kind of smooth arms around my neck—tangle me in its long hair that kept brushin' my stockin' feet. I don't know how many times I pushed its fawnin' face away—six or seven, at the least. If it had come on fightin' with blows or claws, I could have stood it, I think. But it was the soft, yieldin' touch of it, the way it caressed me—in the pitch dark. It put its cheek against my lips again——

"'For the love of God, leave me be!' I cried, droppin' to my knees on the floor, coverin' my face.

"As though loath to go away, it gave me three gentle taps on the soles of my feet. Drawin' them under me, I crouched there, doubled up in a ball on the threshold. For several minutes nothin' happened. I was frozen to the floor. Then I heard the 'tap—tap, tap—tap,' like at first, different from the scrapin' sound. It came from overhead. Professor, I'll confess I hadn't the nerve to look up. I waited till it got fainter and fainter. Finally it stopped altogether, and I started to crawl away into the jewel room. Sumpthin' tempted me to look back. The streak of moonlight in the Egyptian room had shifted and was layin' across the mummy cases, a yard, or perhaps four feet, in front of them. The mummies themselves were in the dark shadow, shapeless bodies standin' stiff and straight like soldiers shot against a wall. It crossed my mind that thim poor devils could never escape their bandages—when—I saw it!"

"Saw what?" I demanded, in a voice louder than I intended.

"Hist!" said Murphy. "I saw the thing goin' back—the thing that had been wanderin' in the jewel room—the thing that lay against my face a moment before."

"You saw it—you actually saw——"

"Yes," interrupted Murphy; "I saw it with my own eyes, as plain as I see you sittin' there."

"What was it—what did it look like?" I queried, trying to steady my voice.

Murphy hesitated a moment, and drew his hand across his eyes as though shutting out a too vivid vision.

"What it was I don't know," he resumed, thoughtfully. "What it looked like I could tell you if I had the words. It's hard to describe. Crouchin' there, lookin' over my shoulder, I could see it floatin' in the air, the full width of the Egyptian room being between us. It wint through the streak of light from the moon, and it was the size and shape of a mummy's head, with a few strands of drapery, or perhaps a wisp of hair, floatin' from it. As to the colour, I'm not sure. Blue—no, I think it was a kind of greyish-green. I wouldn't swear to it, though; but I remember that the shaft of moonlight seemed to go right through it, and still it had a shape and colour of its own. It didn't stay long in the moonlight, thank goodness, and it didn't look my way."

"Where did it go?" I asked.

"It wint"—Murphy spoke slowly, to give me the full significance of his answer—"it wint, Mr. Curator, *back into the mummy case.*"

"Where—which case?"

"The one that stands in the centre—the one that holds old Queen—Queen—— What's her name, Professor?"

"Do you mean Queen An-Sera?"

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"Yes, that's her! Queen An-Sera."

"Why do you say this thing, or apparition, or whatever it was, went back to the mummy case, Murphy? You didn't see it come out in the first place, did you?"

"No—but that's where it belongs, Professor. As sure as I'm sittin' here it's the soul of the old Queen, wanderin' of nights through the museum. Where did I come across her? In the jewel room, didn't I?"

"Yes."

"Exactly! And do you mind the spot in the jewel room?"

"Why, yes; it was under the case containing——"

"The Queen's crown!" interrupted Murphy. "It's her crown she's pinin' for. For thousands of years she's been yearnin' for that crown, and little by little her soul has been struggin' to get through those bandages. To-night it's free—and she won't rest, and we won't rest, till she has that crown. She'll be tappin' at the jewel case all night, tryin' to break the glass. Let her have it, Professor, before we both go mad."

"Let her have it?" I asked. "How—what do you propose?"

"Nothin' much," said Murphy, hopefully. "Just take your bunch of keys from the locker there, walk with me to the jewel room, unlock the case, open the lid—and wait."

"And then what?" I encouraged, humouring him.

"Then," he replied, "if she comes and takes it, well and good. If nothin' happens, if we see and hear nothin'—well, I'm a liar and a fool."

"All right, Murphy," I said, seeing that he was in dead earnest, "I'll do it."

I took my revolver from the desk drawer and placed it in the right-hand pocket of my coat. In the other pocket I put the bunch of keys containing the one which opens the crown jewel case. I handed Murphy my torchlight, his being worthless, and directed him to lead the way. He opened the door that gave on to the statuary room, and instantly stood still.

"Listen!" he cautioned. "There it is again."

I listened, and heard it plainly: a faint, peculiar tap—tap, tap, tap. And then, as both of us stood with straining ears, there came a crash of glass.

"Where is it?" Murphy whispered.

"The jewel room!" I cried. "Hurry!"

There is nothing of the occult or mystic in my make-up, but I confess that the events of the past few seconds, coupled with Murphy's unusual narrative, had thrown my mind into a state of excitement and dread almost equal to his own. As we pressed forward, threading our way through the maze of statuary in the main hall, Murphy reached backwards and signalled me with a pressure of his hand to stop.

"You'd better take your shoes off, too," he whispered. "If it should be a burglar, he'll get us first unless we slip in on him unbeknown."

I did as he suggested. With the torch ready, but unlighted, we moved silently

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"MURPHY'S FRAME STIFFENED. HOVERING ABOVE THE MUMMY CASE, RHYTHMICALLY SWAYING FROM SIDE TO SIDE, WAS THE VAGUE SHAPE HE HAD DESCRIBED."

through the impenetrable blackness of the pioneer room and reached the threshold of the jewel chamber. It, also, was dark. We might as well have stood, face-up, against a black wall. Not even the faintest outline of the cases was discernible. I had expected some light to filter in from the skylight of the Egyptian room adjoining, but the moon was overclouded just then.

Standing shoulder to shoulder, we waited. Half a minute passed, so still, I fancied my own heart-thumps were audible. Then came a faint, almost imperceptible "clink—clink," like the cautious handling of broken glass. I felt Murphy's arm bend slowly upward as he raised his revolver. I took my own from the pocket of my coat. The noise continued, very gently. Practically convinced now that someone was rifling the jewel cabinet after having broken the glass, I was on the point of giving Murphy a whispered command to flash the torch, when a greyish streak of light suddenly crossed the room at right angles to us. The cloud had passed from the moon and the ray I had at first expected shone dimly from the Egyptian room, full across the jewel case.

Murphy's frame stiffened. My eyes sought the case. Hovering above it, rhythmically swaying from side to side, was the vague shape he had described. A chill passed over me. I watched, stupefied, the head of it bend slowly downward, inch by inch, as though measuring time by ages, until it finally disappeared within the chest that held the Queen's jewels. Again came the faint clink of broken glass, and then it rose, painfully slow — dejectedly, I thought, baffled or disappointed in its quest. As it reached a point in the moonlight five and a half or six feet above the case, a sort of sob broke from Murphy's lips.

"God save us!" he muttered—and fired.

The shot echoed and re-echoed through the long corridors of the museum. Simultaneously we rushed forward. In the haze of the revolver smoke the thing quivered—unharmed.

"Drat you!" cried Murphy, and fired again.

An instantaneous report answered his shot.

"Look out!" I shouted, but there was no need. Murphy lay full length on the floor, face up, his arms stretched outward. The thing that hovered above the case was gone.

I knelt at the big fellow's side. The torch was still in his left hand. With it I examined every inch of his body. Strange to say, I had no fear of further attack. Something told me that part of the affair was closed. I could find no wound, not even an abrasion or scratch.

"Murphy!" I called. "Murphy!" My

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voice, unanswered, sounded strangely in the unlighted room. The thought struck me that if he had shot a human being the body must be lying there beside the jewel cabinet. The finding of the person, or thing, would reveal what manner of weapon had been used against Murphy, and enable me to assist him, if the brave fellow were not already beyond mortal aid. Steeling my nerves to the effort, I flashed the torch ahead of me and walked deliberately over to the stand. There was nothing under it, or anywhere around it. I turned my light on the top. The glass, as I expected, was shattered, and bits of it were scattered over the crown jewels. One glance at them, however, convinced me that none was missing. Unconsciously I reached in to remove a jagged triangle of glass from the Queen's crown, when the back of my hand encountered something soft and yielding. It lay close to the inner edge of the chest. The brief contact reminded me of human skin. I drew my hand away, and then, moved by an uncontrollable impulse, deliberately seized hold of it and drew it out, full in the light of my torch. It hung, limp and shrivelled, in my fingers. My gaze shifted to the mummy room.

"Could it be possible?" I murmured, half aloud.

"Could what be, Professor?" came a voice from the floor.

Murphy was sitting up, blinking and rubbing his eyes.

'Fainted! for the first time in my life," he said, sheepishly, getting up and coming towards me. "What have ye there?"

I held it up in the light for his inspection. He handled it religiously, and suddenly shook it free from his hand with a shudder.

"It's the skin of her," he whispered; "it's the skin of the mummy Queen—I've shot her!"

"No—it's not that," I said.

"Then, in the name of sense, what is it?" he said.

"Murphy," I replied calmly, 'you've shot——"

"Yes?"

"A toy balloon!"

"*What!*"

"A toy balloon," I repeated, with a piece of string and a tiny brass ring here on the end, which some little child brought in here and then, in a moment of excitement or abstraction, released, as children do"

"But the 'tap, tap, tap,'" objected Murphy.

"The balloon bouncing against the ceiling," I answered.

"And the scrapin' noise?"

"Was," said I, "that ring dragging on the floor. No wonder the thing bounced back when you struck it, with the string wrapped round your ankle."

"But how about the broken case, Professor? How do you account for that—and why did it keep wanderin' between this jewel cabinet and the mummies?"

"Current of air," I explained, answering his last question first. "As to the glass, it was broken by this crystal ornament here, knocked by the balloon from that old chandelier overhead. It's as plain as can be."

Murphy looked down at his stockinged feet and sneezed.

"Professor," he said, "you're no doubt right, but I'll ask you one favour."

"Granted," said I. "What is it?"

"Put that old woman's skin under her crown here, and leave it."

I did.

SOLUTION TO LAST MONTH'S BRIDGE PROBLEM.

Trick 1. A plays 4 hearts. Y wins with knave.
„ 2. Y plays club. B covers. Z plays ace. A plays queen of trumps.
„ 3. A plays 8 hearts. Z wins with 10.
„ 4. Whatever Z leads A B make remainder.

There is no other solution. Suppose A leads out trumps at start, plainly he wins but 4 trump tricks and ace of spades (5 tricks). If he plays ace of trumps, then small, giving Z the lead, then Z plays *small spade*, when A wins 3 trump tricks and 2 in spades (5 tricks). If, playing as above, A allows Z to win trick 2 with the ace of clubs, this player returns his trump, when A makes 2 trump tricks (his best play), 2 spades, and 1 club (5 tricks). If he tries to trump a spade in dummy, Z, of course, plays trumps, when in.

If Z allows B to win trick 2, B goes on with clubs, A trumps high and plays as before, winning 6 tricks

This is the only Bridge Problem based on the principle of giving away two apparently needless tricks in trumps.

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LEAP-YEAR.

Should Woman's Privilege Become Her Right?

A SYMPOSIUM OF LADY NOVELISTS AND OTHERS.

By ADRIAN MARGAUX.

THIS is Leap-Year, when women have the privilege of proposing marriage. But women have abandoned privileges and insisted upon rights. With the principle of sex equality legally established, the question arises whether the occasional privilege must not now be regarded as an established right?

Some of the novelists have answered the question, it is true, long in advance of the fact of female enfranchisement. Lorna Doone, it may be remembered, in Blackmore's story, practically threw herself at the feet of John Ridd. Dolly Varden, in "Barnaby Rudge," seizing on Joe Willet's first use of her Christian name, impetuously declares her love for him. In these and other instances which could be quoted, however, the maiden simply takes her courage in both hands in order to embolden a lover who might otherwise have remained silent simply because he was too diffident to speak.

Fiction affords other examples of the woman taking the initiative and putting the man to the test with less happy results for herself. When Elsie Venner, in Oliver Wendell Holmes's romance, asks Bernard to love her, she has the mortification to find that the only love he has to give her is that of a brother or a friend. In Hall Caine's "The Manxman," Kate's avowal of her love for Philip is equally futile—she discovers he has never cared for her in the way she has imagined.

Arabella, in "Jude the Obscure," brings about a marriage with Thomas Hardy's hero, but having regard to the lady's character, her case hardly counts. In that very popular story, "The Rosary," Mrs. Barclay's heroine virtually proposes to the hero, but this was only after she had rejected—in a peevish spirit—his own offer of marriage.

Among comparatively recent novels I have been able to find only one frank and unequivocal proposal on the part of a woman to a man. It occurs in Dion Clayton Calthrop's "Perpetua," after the hero has had the misfortune of seeing the girl he loved married to another:—

"How can I help you, dear?" he asked. "I'm no good—I'm not a man, I'm a thing. I've no heart left."

"Marry me," said Stella.

He remained where he was, quite still, absolutely confounded by her words. In a minute he recovered and placed one hand on her shoulder, standing behind her so that he could not see her face. . . . She quivered under the touch of his hand.

"I love you," she said, and he had never heard the passionate ring in her voice before. "I love you. I didn't know it until I found you loved her, and then I knew quite well that I had always loved you. I want you."

He remained standing quietly behind her.

"Stella, my dear," he said, "it's terribly difficult, isn't it?—I don't know what to say. I'm overcome for the moment, and I can't think."

"If you knew what it cost me to say this," she whispered. "I feel as though I had stripped myself naked."

"We should never be happy, my dear," he said; "never be of any real use to one another. I shall always be true to her in my heart, though it seems to have lost any proper, ordinary feeling—you and I are such wonderful friends."

This is from a man's novel, and it is a woman's question. What have the women novelists to say to it, regarded as the interpreters of the feelings and opinions of their sex? For an answer to this query I have consulted a number who may be regarded as representative of the fiction of to-day, asking them in each case to illustrate their statement of opinion, if possible, by reference to one or other of their novels in which the heroine has exercised the privilege or claimed the right which is under discussion.

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SARAH GRAND.



"'Should Women Propose Marriage?' Not, I am sure, until the metamorphosis, which anti-suffragists have so often warned us would be the inevitable result of the political emancipation of women, has taken place, and women by the exercise of their Civil Rights have been converted into creatures of a new species with all the attributes at present peculiar to their sex left out, will they think the right to propose marriage a privilege. So far, I have neither met nor heard of a normal woman to whom the idea was not abhorrent; nor have I ever heard of one proposing in Leap-Year or at any other time—with the single exception of a rich woman in love with a poor man, who, she had good reason to believe, only did not propose because of the difference of fortune. It was an act of heroism on her part, justified by the circumstances, and resulted in a happy marriage, but to this day she shudders to think of it."

"RITA" (MRS. DESMOND HUMPHREYS).



"Is equality of sex to mean the abrogation of all its most delightful and romantic feminine rights? That of being wooed and won; of admiration, homage, devotion? Above all, of that one unforgettable moment when the outward declaration voices the inward passion—as yet only suggested? Again, is a woman to offer herself to the humiliation of rejection, for she may be sure that if a man desires to marry her he will not require her to *ask* him to do so? Such being the case there is surely no question of the Leap-Year privilege becoming an instituted right. The emancipation of woman has led to the breaking down of many barriers, but also to the gradual hardening and coarsening of herself *as* woman. She seems to glory in this as an advance towards the goal of equality. She assumes indifference towards man's lessening respect. But though she may be willing to forgo the courtesies and graces which marked the old-fashioned attitude of sex to sex, she will be less than feminine if she asserts her right to ask a man to marry her instead of waiting *his* request that she would honour him by acceptance of hand and heart.

"Marriage means a great deal more than its proposal. It need not court humiliation as a commencement. That follows quickly enough in most cases.

"I have never introduced the subject into any of my books—so can make no reference to them."

ELINOR GLYN.



"Whether women should take advantage of Leap-Year or not I should imagine was up to the individual woman and could not be decided as an abstract question.

"If her skin is thick enough and she wants the man badly enough, I expect she would let him see it, Leap-Year or no! without any words. But if it became a general custom for women to propose I simply cannot picture the result! Think of all the browbeating females who would be on the war path to hunt little frightened recalcitrant males! Why, there would be a general exodus of these poor things to some country where no such terrifying custom prevailed!

"Heiresses desiring impecunious partners might be sensible, perhaps, to make the demand—or strong-minded maidens who perceive their lovers to be timid and diffident, might give them a hint to encourage them; but until poor old England becomes entirely in the hands of the female sex, I should imagine it would be difficult to force such a custom upon her population."

MRS. C. N. WILLIAMSON.



"You ask me the question whether I think the principle of sex equality, legally established, should give the right to a woman of proposing marriage to a man.

"I think I must answer your question with another. Is it possible that men don't know that women *always* propose? If they don't, how extremely clever we women are to keep them in blissful ignorance of our wily Vivien-ness and our boldness! I am sure, though, if you come to think of it, you will agree with me that seldom did a man ask a woman to marry him unless she had telepathically proposed to him."

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CLO. GRAVES.



The view taken by Mrs. Williamson was very similar to that very tersely expressed by Miss Clo. Graves, the author of the "Dop Doctor," and other celebrated novels published under the pen-name of "Richard Dehan."

"Without impugning," she says, "the modesty of the sex, which as a Middle Victorian I may still be disposed to believe in, I must say that I have never yet known a woman with whom it was not Leap-Year when the male she desired for a life-partner showed any backwardness in coming forward."

GEORGE EGERTON.



"George Egerton" (Mrs. Golding Bright), the authoress of "Keynotes," discussed the matter with me for a few minutes at her Adelphi flat.

"To me," she says, "these questions of women's rights have always appeared to be, in the main, economic questions. When men could afford to keep their women-folk such questions did not arise. But when women had to go out into the world and earn their own livelihood they naturally looked at everything from a different standpoint.

"The mere fact of legal equality is of comparatively little account, but the fact of economic equality is of very great importance, and among other consequences may eventually cause a change in the making of marriages such as you suggest. Formerly if a man asked a woman to marry him it meant almost invariably that he was offering her everything in the material sense, whilst she had nothing to give in return but herself. Nowadays the woman sometimes has an earning capacity approaching if not equalling that of the man, and this will be more and more frequently the case in the future.

"In these circumstances, seeing that there is something like economic equality between them, it may be that the woman will come to think that she has as much right as the man to propose a life partnership. I do not say that I should welcome the change—for one thing I am afraid weak and submissive men will lack the courage to say 'No,' and many unhappy marriages will result. But you may be sure that if a change in custom does take place it will be the result of economic factors. In my opinion, ethical or sentimental considerations have had very little to do with the changes which have taken place in the relations of the sexes."

MRS. BAILLIE REYNOLDS.



"People have very different ideas as to what constitutes privilege!

"I have no doubt at all that a man is entitled to tell a woman he loves her, but that a woman is not entitled to tell a man she loves him is part of an etiquette founded upon the old ideas of superiority of the male creature, and will in all probability disappear as time goes on.

"But I have to own that I, personally, shall not look upon this at all in the light of a desirable reform, but as adding yet one more to the crushing burdens already borne by woman.

"I am one of those women who have always thanked my stars that I was not born a man; and the chief reason for my content has always been that if I were a man I should have had to make love, instead of what seems to me far preferable, having other people make love to me!

"I really could not take on the new stunt! But it is doubtless coming."

WINIFRED GRAHAM.



"When woman proposes it is the death-blow to romance, and because I always strive to write real emotional romance, none of the heroines in my novels has ever proposed! A remark in my latest book, 'Falling Waters,' seems to have caught on with reviewers, for it has been quoted far and wide.

"The wife of a Cabinet Minister who is indulging in a fervent friendship with a bachelor remarks:—

"'Young people nowadays seem very matter-of-fact. Gramophones have eclipsed nightingales, and even moonlight has lost its power. I am told the modern girl prefers a proposal at breakfast.'

"Well, that's just it. If women propose,

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they will probably 'pop the question' over eggs and bacon, and Leap-Year be responsible for one more nail in the coffin of the gentler sex's old-world charm.

"Yet men tell me that our girls really propose all the time, though in wordless fashion. The drooping of an eyelid, the raising of an eyebrow, lips that invite kisses—the 'please-marry-me' look—all are irresistible, and a voiceless invitation to buy a wedding-ring.

"Well, let the dear things go on proposing in that way, it's the best after all, for a hint becomes a delicate form of suggestion, and saves the embarrassment of a refusal. Good luck to the Leap-Year girl who subtly brings matters to a head without giving her future husband the pleasure of saying '*she* proposed to me,' when he wants to let off steam in the years to come."

MAXWELL GRAY.



"The Leap-Year superstition was probably based on the abnormality of the number of days in the year and provides harmless diversion at an appropriate season. The only way to make the abnormal practice of the woman proposing general would be for Mr. Lloyd George to make an edict—or rush a Bill through Parliament—to that effect, when of course people would think it (or pretend to think it) a holy thing.

"In that case a certain proportion of prospective old bachelors would cheerfully become Benedicts, a great many nervous men would in desperation fly to an Order of Lay Celibates, and what would become of the rest I cannot imagine.

"There is nothing to prevent ladies from proposing marriage except the fact that there is nothing the human male appears to resent so much as the fact of any woman having matrimonial designs upon him."

ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER.



"As far as my experience goes, improvements and reforms nearly always make things worse than they were before: and I know nothing which is in less need of reformation than the good old saying, 'Man proposes.' He does it very well; he has always done it very well; then why not continue to leave the business in his hands?"

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Finally here are the opinions of two eminent actresses:—

IRENE VANBRUGH.



"I think that the privilege of proposing marriage belongs to men. Occasionally it may be necessary to deprive a man of one of his 'rights,' but it would always be ungracious of a woman to deprive a man of a privilege which he has had accorded to him from time immemorial."

In view of the above opinion it is of interest to endeavour to recall any instances of women proposing on the stage. At the moment I can think of only one—in George Bernard Shaw's "Man and Superman." Perhaps the scene, however, is to be regarded as only part of the topsy-turvydom of the whole play:—

TANNER: ". . . Your father's will appointed me your guardian, not your suitor. I shall be faithful to my trust."

ANN (in low siren tones): "He asked me who would I have as my guardian before he made that will. I chose you!"

TANNER: "The will is yours then; the trap was laid from the beginning."

ANN (concentrating all her magic): "From the beginning—from our childhood—for both of us—by the Life Force."

TANNER: "I will not marry you. I will not marry you."

ANN: "Oh, you will, you will!"

TANNER: "I tell you, no, no, no!"

ANN: "I tell you yes, yes, yes!"

TANNER: "NO!"

ANN (coaxing—imploring—almost exhausted): "Yes. Before it is too late for repentance. Yes."

TANNER: "When did all this happen to me before? Are we two dreaming?"

ANN (suddenly losing her courage with an anguish that she does not conceal): "No. We are awake; and you have said no; that is all."

TANNER (brutally): "Well?"

ANN: "Well, I made a mistake; you do not love me."

TANNER (seizing her in his arms): "It is false. I love you. The Life Force enchants me: I have the whole world in my arms when I clasp you."



GLADYS COOPER.

"I can imagine nothing more *horrible* than a woman proposing to a man."

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LIGHTNING SKETCHES.

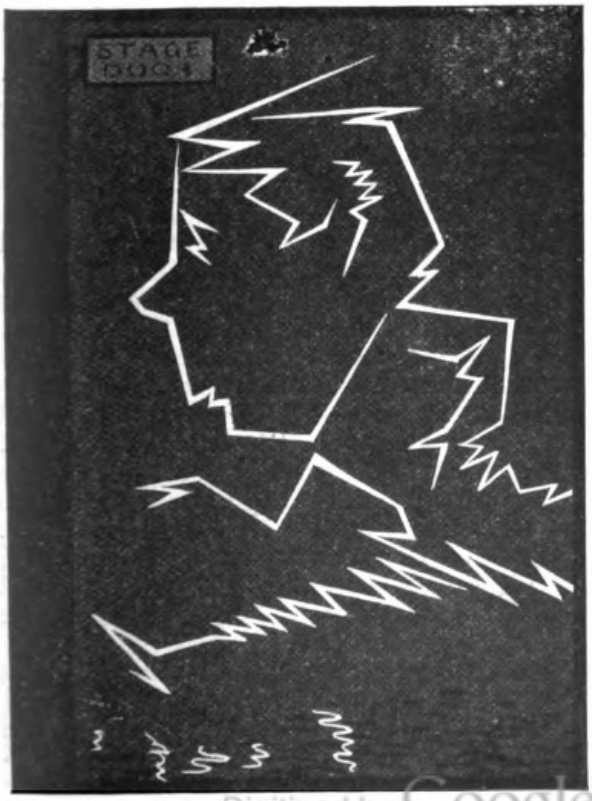
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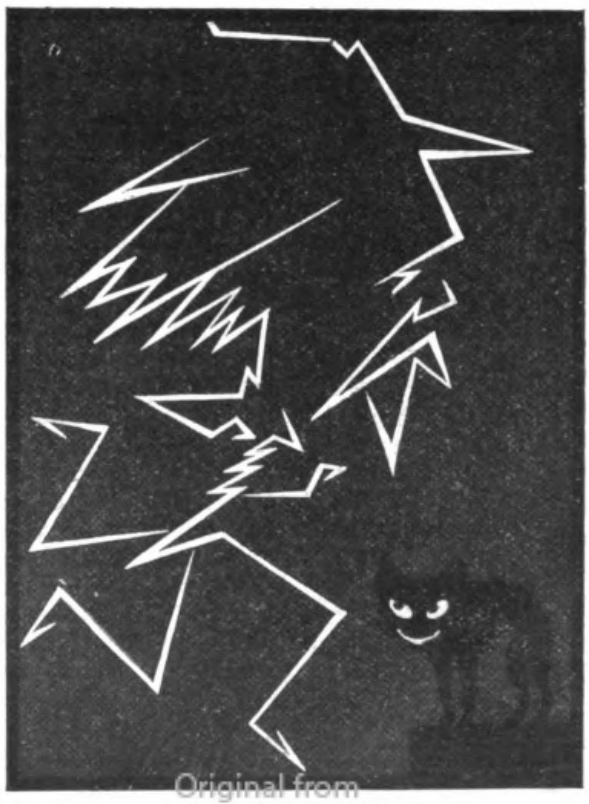
MR. LLOYD GEORGE.



LORD BEATTY.



MR. SEYMOUR HICKS.



SIR HALL CAINE.

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FANCY DRESS

By M. L. C. PICKTHALL

ILLUSTRATED BY W·R·S·STOTT R·I



"DO I look all right?" asked Lawson, feverishly.

"It depends on who or what—or is it whom or which?—you are trying to look like," suggested Mavor.

"Don't waste time being funny."

"Well, if it's Macbeth or the Witch of Endor, I'd say you were too flighty; if Little Boy Blue or Casabianca, too sophisticated; while, to the critical eye, Alice in Wonderland or Rob Roy——"

"Oh, come *on*," laughed Henshawe.

They came, with a good deal of noise, down the stairs behind him and out of the hotel into the frosty evening and the pine-woods. They had a two-mile walk to the other hotel across the valley, where someone—the original promoter of the idea could not be traced—had suggested an impromptu fancy-dress dance. No one had been allowed to send for a costume. And a day of strenuous improvisation had left them in the wildest of high spirits.

They rioted along the glittering path between the dark trees. Henshawe, outwardly one of them, possessed enough detachment by right of his few extra years to wonder at them a little. Carter, who was a Wild Man in hearth-rugs, walked in the van, singing a sentimental song with a good deal of action; and Carter just the other day had been in debt and desperate trouble. Mavor and Lawson were jazzing among the pine-roots with some difficulty; and Mavor was here with a consumptive brother whom he devotedly loved; and little Lawson, with a wife and children dependent on him, was here for his own health. While between Wayne, the graceful dust-sheet Pierrot, and himself, was Olive in her Spanish mantilla; and a gulf as deep as hate.

It occurred to Henshawe that they put on their moods as they put on their fancy dress, and that the one stood in as unreal a relation to their lives as the other.

Wayne ranged up beside Henshawe, saying, "What are you?"

Before Henshawe could answer, little Lawson looked back. "Hen? Oh, the old man's going in his everyday character!" and they all laughed, for Henshawe was going as a Fool. He opened his great-coat and showed Wayne. Mrs. Lawson and a kindly chambermaid and some yards of red and green glazed cambric had done wonders for Henshawe; his lean, dark agility was admirably suited. Wayne said, "That's good! If there's a prize, you ought to get it." And the others agreed.

"He looks so natural," said Lawson. They all laughed again. At the back of his mind, Henshawe knew that Lawson was worrying about Mrs. L., who had been too tired to come; and that Wayne would have knocked him down and trampled him into the snow with pleasure even while he offered his cigarette-case. Laughter, civility—this was just the fancy dress of civilization clothing the passions and griefs of man.

Wayne began an amiable and trivial argument as to whether Henshawe's costume would have been improved by gold bells instead of the little silver ones he had secured for it. Wayne had hurt his knee ski-ing. He walked slowly, and Henshawe fell behind with him. Henshawe, too, went clothed in the fancy dress of convention, since there was no man in the world he would not have walked with more gladly. The others went on, noisily.

Then, very suddenly, that clothing was rent away.

They were going round a corner where there had been a landslip; and in consequence the path overhung a respectable precipice. Wayne was walking on the

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outside. His hurt knee gave way, he slipped, staggered, swung outward, and for an instant of time balanced on the brink, two hundred feet above the rocks of the fall.

Henshawe had time for nothing but to fling out a hand. It was a gesture possible to mistake: Henshawe might either have been trying to pull Wayne back from the edge, or thrusting him over; and for that instant he saw the stark thought, the stark fear, in Wayne's eyes. Then his grip closed on Wayne's wrist, and he drew him back on the path. But the clothing was rent; the curtain had gone down; they stood facing each other in silence. Concealment was no longer possible.

At last Wayne drew a long breath, and said simply, "Well. That's almost a relief!"

Henshawe did not ask him what he meant. He knew. To both of them Olive meant everything.

"It's come to a fight between us," Wayne went on, hardly. "And I'm glad we don't have to—pretend any more,"

"Only before her," agreed Henshawe, after a pause. "*She* must not be troubled."

Wayne nodded, almost sympathetically; their antagonism was almost as great a bond between them as affection would have been. He moved restlessly away from Henshawe, turned, and came back. He met Henshawe's steady eyes with a little puzzled shrug of the shoulders.

"I never knew," said Wayne, under his breath, "that it was possible to care so much."

"Nor I."

After a moment, Wayne smiled crookedly. "Nor did I know," he continued, "that it was possible to—dislike another fellow so much!"

"I know," said Henshawe; "it's—strange."

Again Wayne shrugged helplessly, staring at the older man. "Strange," he repeated, "it's terrifying! I've been a—friendly sort all my life. I don't think I've ever disliked anyone very much before. And now this comes!" He turned again from Henshawe, and came back. His face was white, his passion had broken bounds. He seized Henshawe's arm. "If I thought I was going to lose her," he said through his teeth, "I'd almost find it in me to do to you what for the flash of a horrible second I thought you were going to do to me just now—fling you over the cliff!"

"Yes," agreed Henshawe, with his unyielding quiet. "Doesn't it sound absurd?" His eyes softened as they rested on the younger man's strained face. He finished, "One of us will have to lose her."

"Yes."

Henshawe's calm broke. His face twitched. He said hurriedly, "You've everything on your side: youth, money, success; and these things mean that all the influence of her people will be with you—and she's very young. It's—not fair."

"Things never are quite fair."

"No. I'm thirty-eight. I've had a hard life—a hard, poor, lonely life, and success is not even in sight. Don't think," he flashed suddenly, with a fierceness that paled Wayne's passion, "that I'm asking you for pity!"

"No." Wayne flushed. He went on quickly: "It's hard on you, Henshawe. And you make me sorry to be against you. You are acting rather finely through all this."

"Then you're acting still more finely," answered Henshawe, hardly, "or you care less. For I don't pretend to feel for anything or anyone but—Olive. I'd feel I had a chance, with you out of the way."

"That's what I feel about you. I was going to ask her to-night."

"So was I," said Henshawe, grimly. After a minute they both laughed; but it was laughter on the edge of a precipice deeper than the one by which they stood, that violet hollow striped with pine-tree shadows and starred with tiny home-lights in the snow.

"To make it fair," said Wayne, slowly, "the one who loves her most ought to have the right of asking her first."

They were silent. A faint wind, cold and pure as if born among the stars, stirred the dark-crystalled branches above them. Then Henshawe spoke with an effort. "That's a generous thing to have said, or even to have thought, Wayne. But it would not be—a possible thing—to find out."

"I suppose not. I take it, Henshawe, that we both love her—as much as it is in us to love anyone. I know I—well, life would be a pretty barren sort of thing without Olive in it!"

"For me," said the dark Henshawe, quietly, "life without her has come to be—not a possible thing."

"Every fellow says that who gets it hard."

"Yes. Only I mean it."

Wayne stared at him curiously through the twilight. He said, awkwardly, "Just because we're against each other in this, I think we owe each other the truth. Henshawe, *is* that the truth?"

"Yes." Henshawe turned away and leaned against a tree so that Wayne could not see his face, and his Fool's bells jingled softly as he moved. The hardness had all gone out of him. He said, wearily, "It's the life I've had, you see. I couldn't just—explain it to you, Wayne But there's only this left in it. This has come late. If I lose it, I—don't think I can go on."

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Wayne whispered, more to himself than Henshawe, "Well, we take things differently. God knows I should be hurt; crippled for a time. But I suppose I'd go on—after a fashion." He went after Henshawe and laid a hand on his shoulder. "Henshawe," he asked, hesitatingly, "how do you stand—with Olive?"

After a minute, Henshawe answered, steadily, "She doesn't know anything about—love—yet. She's just a kind young thing. If you ask her first, Wayne, she'll take you."

"By heavens," breathed Wayne, "but you're white!"

Henshawe laughed a little. "No," he answered, "I'm not 'white.' I'd shoot you or stick a knife into you at this moment, Wayne!" And presently Wayne laughed too, but his honest eyes did not lose their hard, considering look. He knew he loved Olive with the utmost power of which he was capable; but in Henshawe's presence he was vaguely aware of something which overtopped his own longing as the hills overtopped the fair valley below.

He said, hesitatingly, "Henshawe, I—almost wish I could give you first chance. But"—he choked—"I can't."

Henshawe swung round on him. "Why should you? You love her, I suppose, as much as I do—in your way. I wouldn't give you my chance." Under his coat the green and scarlet fluttered, and the little bells chimed trivially. Wayne looked away from his face.

"What are we to do, then?"

"Leave it to Fate," said the Fool.

"You mean?"

"Draw lots which shall ask her first."



"OLIVE, IN HER SPANISH MANTILLA."

"That doesn't seem fair either," said Wayne, slowly.

"Why not?" Henshawe's tired face was turned to the stars; he did not see the intent look with which Wayne regarded him. "Since we can't decide which one of us two loves her most, it's the fairest way."

"Very well. We'll draw lots, and abide by them. Will you trust me to — to arrange 'em?"

"Of course."

Pierrot broke two twigs from a tree and shuffled them in his hands. His face was white over the fantastic ruff. He said: "You make a good enemy, Henshawe. I wish you were a friend instead." He held out to Henshawe the two twigs. "Longer twig gets first chance?" he asked.

"Yes," agreed Henshawe. He stared a moment at the little sticks in Wayne's hand that were to decide his fate; for he felt that Olive's young heart, swayed between them, would gently, inevitably incline to the one of them who first spoke to her of love in her soul's April season; then he drew one.

After a moment Wayne opened his hand. Henshawe had drawn the shorter stick.

There was silence, broken at last by Henshawe, who said, in a low voice, "Only another defeat. But it's the last."

He spoke to himself, not to Wayne, who stood rigid, with no sign of relief or triumph on his face; as if he were waiting for something with every nerve tense.

"I wish you good luck, O my enemy!" said Henshawe, smiling a little. "Olive—will get a good man." He dropped the stick

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in the snow, and for the first time Wayne saw the incredible purpose in his eyes.

"Henshawe!" he cried, suddenly, in an amazed voice; and again, "*Henshawe!*" He laid hold of him, but held no more than the coat, from which Henshawe slipped and was gone—gone past him, up the hillside above the path, flashing in his gay cotton. The pines hid him in a moment; only the tinkle of his Fool's bells came back to Wayne, and were still.

Wayne reeled on the path. He had a dizzy sense of revelation—the chances of tragedy behind the commonplace, of horror behind the trivial; of bare nature behind the little graciousness of life. "He meant it!" gasped Wayne, half incredulous yet. "Great heavens above, *he meant it!*" He dropped the coat with a stifled cry and sprang up the hill after Henshawe.

He did not waste breath in calling. As well, he knew, call to the avalanche as to that passion of despair suddenly released. He went up the hill in long leaps. He had a dreamlike sense of unreality. He kept repeating to himself, "He *can't* intend to! He can't mean *that!*" But he shivered as he ran. He had lived long enough to know what a tiny incident will sometimes swing an overstrained mind from reason to unreason, from control to madness. He remembered things—Eustace Derwent at the club, and the shot in the telephone-closet; Payne Harker and Molly West; Garratt's face in the grey dawn when they broke in the library door. He flung himself through the trees, panting. They took toll of his fluttering white. His heart beat in thuds. He could not come in sight of Henshawe. He only heard, far ahead, the chime and silly tinkle of a Fool's bells.

He struggled up ledge after ledge, barred with black shadow of trees and silver streaks of moonlight on snow. He picked up Henshawe's footsteps on more open ground at last, where a goat-track ribboned ever upward to wilder heights. The keen, thin air left his lungs unfilled, he thought his heart must break; but his dread drove him on through the beauty of the young winter night. For the first time in his life he knew himself defeated; but he thought the little chiming bells were not so far ahead.

A cleft in the rocks showed him briefly a vaster world, a world of mountain ranges outspread for miles in the moon; the woods gave place to slopes of stones, or to alpine meadows showing streaks of green through the snow. The moon itself was not whiter or more still. He did not know that, for all his labouring breath, he was running lightly as a white cloud over the white ground. His distorted black shadow, bobbing beside him in the silence, seemed to have an individuality of its own, it was so queer and clumsy, with its torn tunic, ballooning trousers caught at the ankle, and frills and silken balls.

He turned a spur. Again that vaster world swung to his vision. In an abyss of silvery air Wayne saw something that floated downward, downward. His heart wrenched in a sudden sickness. But it was only an owl, disturbed among the stones, and drifting to the valley.

Rounding an abrupt boulder, Wayne came in sight of that other fantastic figure he followed. He sobbed for breath. He could not have called now if he had wanted to. He could only force himself on, running as Henshawe ran; he prayed God, a little faster. In his thin shoes, through which the glare-ice cut his feet, he made no sound.

The lean Fool ran well, his little bells swinging about him on his green and scarlet tags. He showed sharp-drawn against the pale sky. And Wayne's will seemed to loose itself from his body, run ahead, and stay that other who ran.

Light and silent as a cat, Wayne was gaining. But how fast the other went—how fast!—toward that great gulf where the owl still floated downward like a flake of snow. Running now desperately, wildly, Wayne saw the fir-forest far below, small and close as dark grass; the tiny lights of the hotel in the midst; the vast arch of the night; all thin and unreal as a picture painted on glass, presently to dissolve. He flung himself forward. Henshawe had paused a moment, sharp against the stars; poised, like a diver, with raised arms.

Wayne dashed forward, slipped on the ice, gripped Henshawe about the knees even as he fell, and in falling dragged him back.

They rolled ten feet down the ledge behind them. Then Henshawe broke clear and reeled to his feet, his crazy bells clattering. Wayne, rising too, was met by a crashing blow from Henshawe's fist; he staggered, plunged forward again, broke through Henshawe's guard, caught him round the waist, and again brought him down. Henshawe battered him like a madman. Wayne's white ruff was grotesquely broken and splashed with red; he worked upward to a hold on the Fool's throat. This was no time for the niceties of combat. He had to fight Henshawe as once he had fought a man mad with drink; the desire for death now and then takes a man like the desire for drink. Wayne kept his head down and held on. He used his knees, too. They rolled backward and forward, grunting inarticulately. Sometimes the white and the silk balls would be uppermost, then the slashed scarlet and green; again, both

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THE NICETIES OF COMBAT. THEY ROLLED BACKWARD AND FORWARD, ... LY, WHITENED WITH SNOW, STREAKED WITH BLOOD."

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seemed to mingle as they struggled, whitened with snow, streaked with blood.

Wayne began to wonder if he would be defeated in this, too.

But suddenly the crazy strength against which he fought slackened. The life seemed to go out of Henshawe's limbs. He relaxed and lay perfectly limp and inert under Wayne. After a minute Wayne rose cautiously. Henshawe did not stir. The madness had spent itself. He had given in.

Wayne, feeling sick and silly, stood and stared down on the battered Fool, who lay at length before him, face-down in the snow. There was no contempt or dislike now in Pierrot's eyes. The green and scarlet body at his feet was shaken. It seemed to Wayne quite in keeping with all the fantastic business of the night that Henshawe should be lying there and crying like a baby while he himself looked on, so sorry for old Henshawe and liking him most awfully.

Presently, with a faint jingle of bells, the Fool lifted his head. He looked at Wayne unashamed. He had not far to look, for Wayne was kneeling beside him, an unsteady hand on his shoulder.

"Why did *you* stop me?" asked Henshawe, brokenly.

Pierrot smiled. He said, in the voice a man sometimes uses to a friend with whom and for whom he has suffered, "Because I cheated you. I had another stick up my sleeve. I cheated you on purpose, to see if you meant what you said. You've given proof enough, I think, that you did—you old Fool! The first chance is yours. I—don't love her—like *this*."

An hour later, at the brilliant entrance of the hotel across the valley, Lawson detached himself from a gabbling crowd and rushed on a somewhat tattered Pierrot just emerging from the moonlight. His face was grey and drawn, but his valiant eyes were indomitably merry. He was representing a famous newspaper, and was hung all over with tin watches set at different hours.

"Where on earth have you fellows been?" he demanded. "You've missed a lot of fun. There's a fat chap in the supper-room who thinks he's threatened with a nervous breakdown. I've told him that Wayne here, in spite of his youth, is one of the foremost consulting specialists in the place, and that his specialities are early rising, exercise, and a vegetarian diet. Come on. He's waiting for you, Wayne, in a condition between horror at the prospect and satisfaction at getting your advice free."

Wayne grinned, and slipped his arm through Lawson's. He said, with careful lightness, over his shoulder to Henshawe, "I'll see you later. Good luck!" He and Lawson went off together, and watching them go, it came to Henshawe that fancy dress is sometimes the bravest stuff a man can wear.

Then he, too, turned towards the lights and the music, and to a girl with a lovely unawakened face under a Spanish mantilla, who stood at the door of the dancing-room, waiting for a Fool.

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 78.

FROM either side they go, on pleasure bent,
Travellers to the coast or continent.

1. A hundred, one, five, one, and fifty write,
And then the meaning may be termed polite.
2. Province where wisdom should be found select,
Cut off its head, and then its curve reject.
3. A lady, one of nine? Though such surmise
The signatures suggest, 'tis otherwise.
4. Musician went ahead; 'tis fair to state
That some folk lost their cash, at any rate.
5. Where Seven can name a flower, and Two a fruit,
Six is the very word our wants to suit.
6. Here is translated, in new order set—
Now can you think of special epithet?
7. A gift that is not granted to the dumb,
From which reversed a cat may chance to come.
8. In case a bygone day in foreign land
Brings him to light, dismiss him out of hand.
9. Jam both to-day and yesterday, but so
It was not five-and-twenty years ago.
10. One letter let each verse in order yield:
His nurse and mother then will be revealed.
11. A measure and a ruler make it plain
How childhood sometimes has to suffer pain.
12. Find land, find water, solvers who are skilled;
Let anagram succeed, for so 'tis willed.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostic No. 78 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on March 10th.*

Two answers may be sent to every light.

It is essential that solvers, with their answers to this acrostic, should send also their real names and addresses.

ANSWER TO No. 76.

1.	G	as	H
2.	L	e	O
3.	A	bo	U
4.	S	urplu	S
5.	S	hap	E

NOTES.—Light 1. Shag. 3. Leigh Hunt, *Abou Ben Adhem and the Angel.* 5. Hap, in S.E.

ANSWER TO No. 77.

1.	C	onsol	S
2.	R	as	P
3.	O	sie	R
4.	C	orell	I
5.	U	nicor	N
6.	S	win	G

NOTE.—Light 6. Or "Swinging."

Franz (Lady Young, Oak Lea, Silverhill, St. Leonards-on-Sea) should have been included among the list of the prizewinners for the twelfth series, published last month. She answered all the acrostics correctly, and will receive a cheque of the same value as the other eight winners.

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MULTUM IN PARVO.

A COMPENDIUM OF SHORT ARTICLES.

HOW SHOP-WINDOW MODELS ARE MADE.



THE SCULPTOR IS WORKING ON A HEAD FROM WHICH A NEW MOULD WILL BE MADE; BY USING A MODEL HE MANAGES TO GIVE THE HEAD A LIFE-LIKE EXPRESSION.

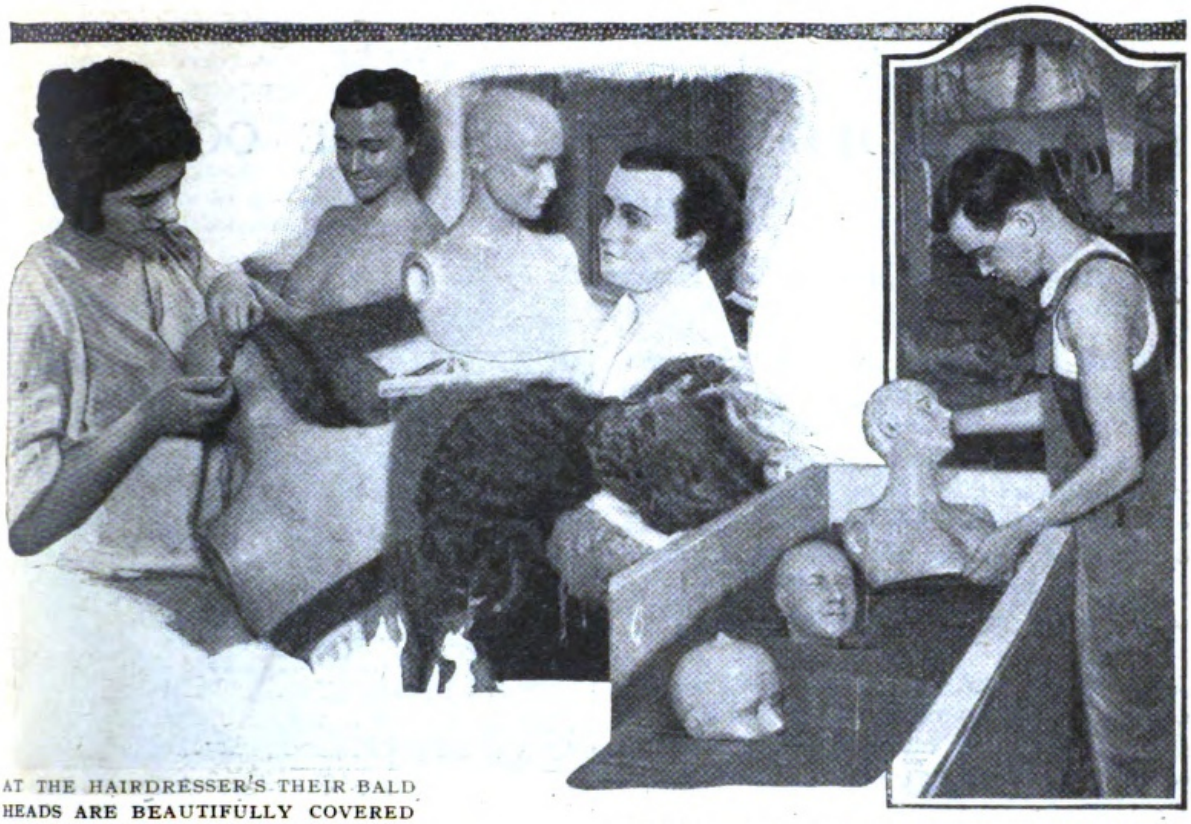


COMPARING A WAX ARM WITH A FLESH-AND-BLOOD ONE. THE ARMS, HEAD, AND SHOULDERS ARE MADE OF WAX, BUT THE REST OF THE BODY IS CONSTRUCTED OF PAPIER-MÂCHÉ.



AFTER HER ARM HAS BEEN SNAPPED INTO POSITION SHE WILL BE PROPERLY DRESSED IN THE VERY LATEST FASHION AND PLACED IN THE SHOP WINDOW. SHE HAS ALREADY CULTIVATED THE SUPERCILIOUS LOOK WHICH SHE WILL USE ON THE GAPING CROWDS.

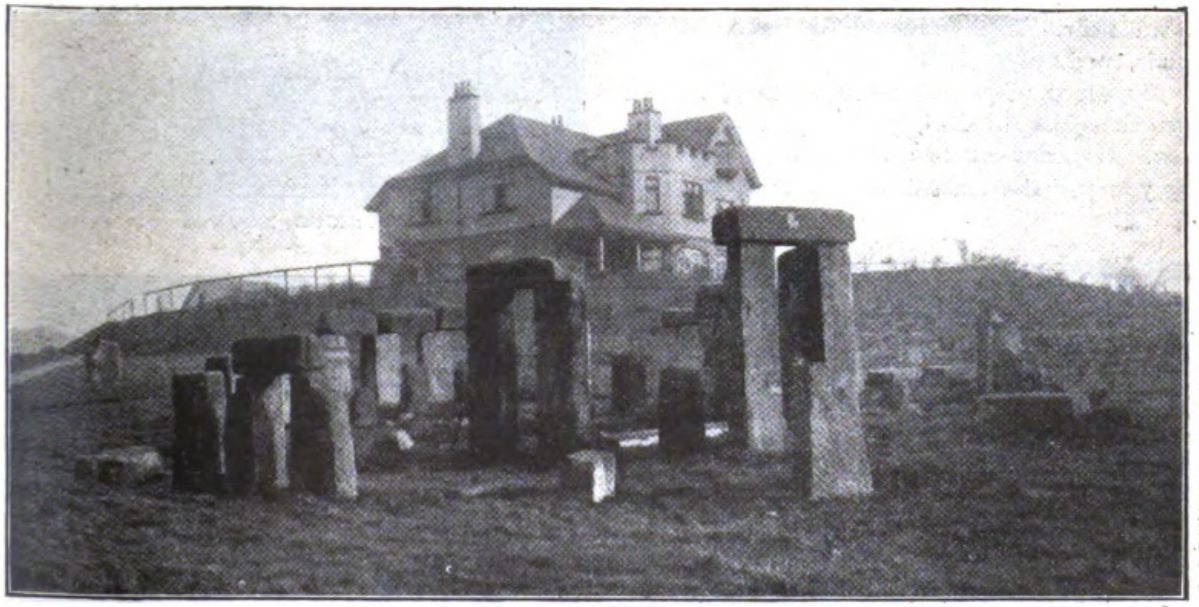
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AT THE HAIRDRESSER'S THEIR BALD HEADS ARE BEAUTIFULLY COVERED —NOT WITH WIGS, BUT WITH SEPARATE HAIRS, EACH ONE PUSHED INTO PLACE WITH A HOT POINTED INSTRUMENT, SO AS TO RESEMBLE CLOSELY-GROWING HAIR.

GIVING THE HEADS THEIR FIRST BATH; THEY HAVE JUST COME OUT OF THE MOULD, AND ARE PUT IN THE WATER SO THAT THEY WILL COOL AND HARDEN—HAIRLESS, TOOTHLESS, HELPLESS.

STONEHENGE IN MINIATURE.



JUST outside his Vicarage at Stoke-on-Trent, the Rev. M. Graham has constructed a replica of the famous circle of stones at Stonehenge, the model being one-quarter the size of the original. At one time Mr. Graham was vicar within four miles of the original Stonehenge, in Wiltshire, and on his appointment to Stoke he conceived and carried out this happy idea for utilizing a waste piece of ground adjoining his new home. An inscription on one of the stones relates the history of the original circle.

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A CYCLONIC STORM.
THE DREADED "TIGER OF THE OCEANS."

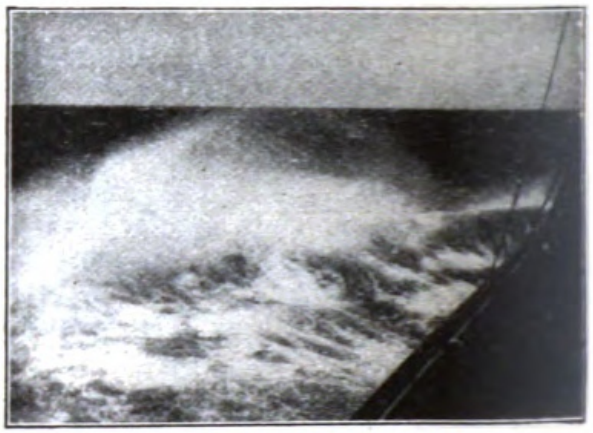
BY W. HOPE HODGSON.

With unique Photographs by the Author.

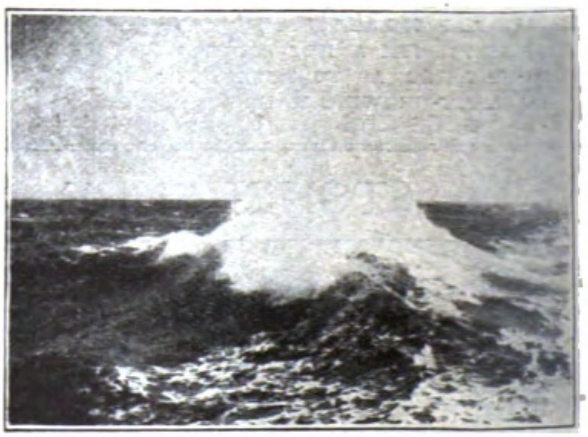
IMAGINE yourself at sea, a settling calm beginning to sleep about you, and a general sense of almost stagnant quiet coming upon the water. As a landsman you would probably say that the least likely thing to happen would be a cyclonic storm; but a sailorman, lifting his nose and sniffing the air, would, maybe, get the reek of that dreaded Tiger of the Oceans—a cyclone—stealing down upon him.

Or, again, he may not; for his weather-glass may give him no warning, his sea and his sky may both conspire to hide the approach of the monster, and his every trained sense fail him, when suddenly there will steal upon him out of the hidden distance the low thunder-growl of the coming cyclone.

And this is not the only way the storm may come upon you. It will often steal upon you behind the storm curtains of some minor gale as you bowl along, swift and wet, with a good, spanking twelve-knot-an-hour wind, the glass high, and nothing to tell you that the beast has drawn near. Till, suddenly, a break in the clouds, perhaps to leeward, shows you a vast, black mass of vapour—sheet-lead clouds. You scan the glass to find, probably, that it has *risen*. But, nevertheless, if you are a wise sea-dog you will shorten sail swiftly for your very



THE SEA—NO LONGER CALM—



HURLS UP CURIOUS MOUNDS OF FOAM.



A SKY THAT HERALDS AN APPROACHING CYCLONE.

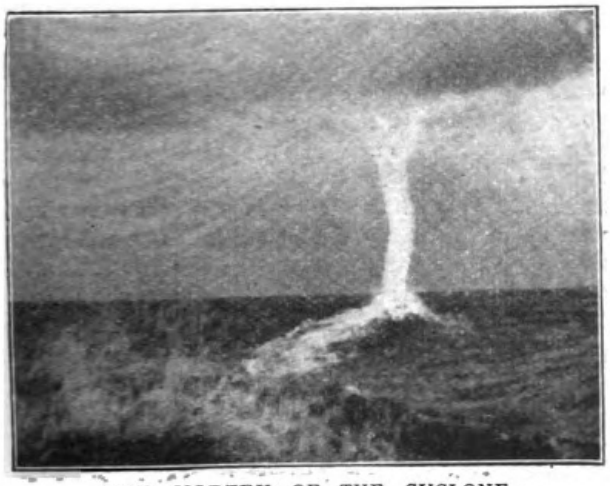


VIVID FLASHES OF LIGHTNING LIGHT UP THE SKY.

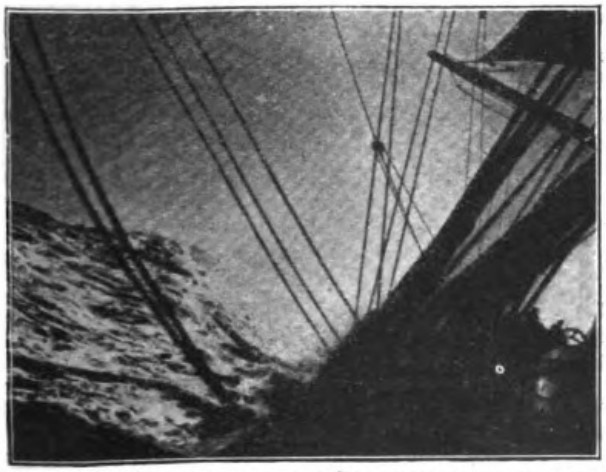
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life; though mightily as you may work you stand the chance of being too late, and the storm catches you but half-prepared.

In a very short time the sea will be hurling up curious mounds of foam: the sky becomes overcast with heavy clouds, lit up as night comes on with vivid flashes of fork lightning. The vessel wallows heavily, labouring amid the great sea which sooner or later begins to break over her in hundreds of tons of water at a time. And the wind! Ripping and tearing as though a mighty invisible beast with teeth as of ploughshares were attacking the vessel. The horror and terror of it all! It shames into puny silence the heaviest thunders, and holds you stunned by the weight and impact of that immense volume of sound. That is the Tiger of the Sea, culminating in the terrible pyramidical sea which, in its worst form, has power to batter the stoutest ship to pieces.



THE VORTEX OF THE CYCLONE.

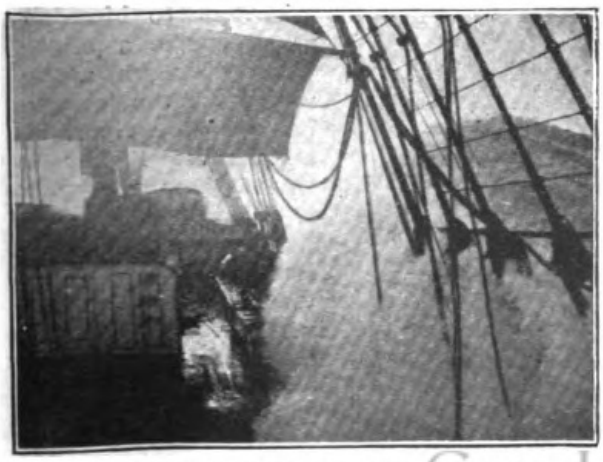


THE VESSEL WALLOWING IN THE GREAT SEAS.

It is not yet a matter of human knowledge how a cyclone begins. Some scientists suggest that it is really a vast electric, whirling, disc-like mass of electricity descending from the upper air. Others have suggested that it may be due to the air becoming heated at certain points and rising into the upper air, causing those vast vortices or funnels into which the colder air flows from every point of the compass. The generally accepted theory is that electricity enters hugely into the composition and being of these incredible storms. They are mostly met with near the Equator, from which, in every case, they depart usually west and north, or west and south, depending on which side of the line they form.

We know that in shape they are circular, and that the wind in them revolves at a tremendous rate of speed; indeed, they may be described as immense whirl-storms, sometimes a thousand miles in diameter, having in their centres a vortex varying in size from five to thirty miles. This centre of vortex is the focus point of danger, the place where so many fine ships have met their end.

Happily, to-day the laws which govern the movements of this monstrous phenomenon have been laid bare and set out in plain print, so that the master mariner, at the outset of a cyclonic storm, may at once hasten to take such action as is necessary to escape that fateful "centre of death." Thus has our knowledge and experience of the law of storms robbed the cyclone of much of its old terror for the brave men who sail the high seas.



HUNDREDS OF TONS OF WATER BREAKING OVER THE SHIP.

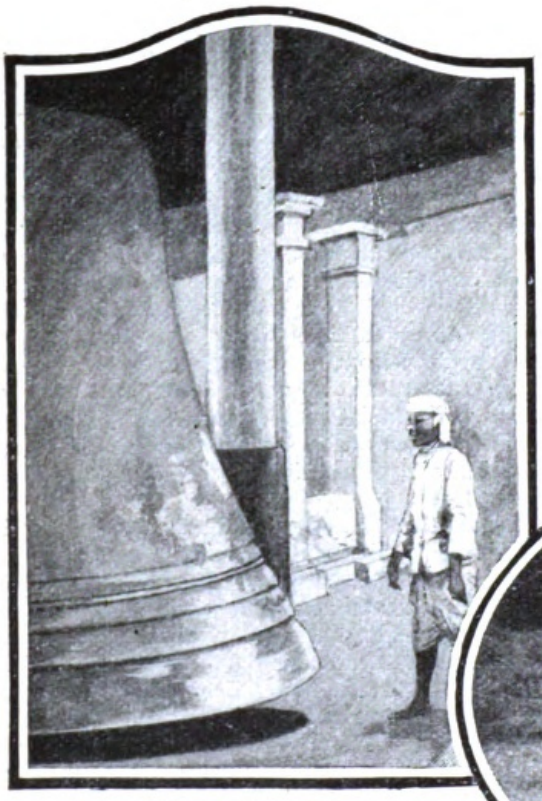


THE FOLLOWING MORNING—THE STORM ABATING.

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THE GREAT BELL OF MINGUN.

A MARVELLOUS FEAT OF PRIMITIVE ENGINEERING.



THE GIANT BELL—ONE OF THE LARGEST IN THE WORLD.

WHEN we inspect the great engineering works of past ages the first thing that strikes our imagination is the immense labour, the time, the patience, and the stupendous cost that must have been expended in carrying them to completion without the aid of machinery or steam power. But if an intelligent curiosity impels us to inquire about the means employed by these engineers of ancient times we are filled with admiration for their ingenuity and resourcefulness.

In this article is described a feat of engineering performed in Upper Burma, many y[illegible] which occ[illegible]



THE BUILDING OF WHICH THE MINGUN [illegible]AS TO HAVE BEEN PLACED.

with implements so primitive as to appear incredible until we know exactly how it was done. The task was to transport a bell across a river and place it on the top of a low hill. Perhaps at first this may not seem a very astonishing performance; but when it is explained that the bell is one of the largest in the world, weighing many tons, that the river is the mighty Irrawaddy, and that the implements used were adzes for felling trees, mattocks for digging, and sections of hollow bamboos for carrying water, then the enormous difficulty of the undertaking can be appreciated.



THE STEEP BANK OF THE IRRAWADDY, UP WHICH THE BELL WAS RAISED.

Visitors to Mandalay usually make a point of visiting Mingun, a small village on the opposite bank of the river, and some miles higher up. Exactly how many miles is difficult to say; for the unit of length in Burma is the distance that a man can walk without feeling an uncontrollable desire to sit down and chew betel-nut. But if we say that Mingun is six "chews" from Mandalay we shall not be far wrong. The trip

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occupies a whole day, but is done in the most agreeable manner on one of the luxurious mail steamers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Company.

On reaching Mingun you scramble up the steep river bank and pass through the village on your way to the rising ground where the bell has found a resting-place. This is not the spot for which it was originally intended; but of this we shall speak later. The bell is one of the largest in the world, though not so heavy as the great bell of Moscow, which weighs one hundred and ninety-eight tons. But this was cracked in the founding, and, as a great triangular gap in the metal renders it useless as a bell, it now stands on a pedestal in the Kremlin, while the Mingun bell is unblemished, and rings true, with a deep, booming tone that can be heard far down the Irrawaddy. We need not dwell on the process of casting the bell, for this art is very ancient, and among people less humane than the Burmese it has been connected with the most abominable atrocities. When the bronze bell at Seoul, in Korea, was cast, the magicians directed that a living baby should be thrown into the molten metal to ensure the success of the venture. This horrible thing was done, and now, it is said, whenever the great bell tolls you always hear the wail of a dying child.



THE KIOSK IN WHICH THE BELL NOW HANGS.

The Mingun bell was cast on the other side of the Irrawaddy, and it is a perpetual source of wonder to visitors how the Burmese managed to bring it across the river, raise it up the high bank, and get it into its present position. This was done by hydraulic power, and no one can fail to admire the ingenuity with which the men who did it availed themselves of the mighty forces of Nature. There was little difficulty in rolling the bell down to the river's edge, while, to transport it across, a strong raft of teak logs was prepared. This was built on the shelving bank in the season when the river is low, and the bell was hauled upon it. There it lay until the early summer, when the heat of the sun melts the snows upon the Himalayas and the river rises in flood. The Burmese are highly skilled in guiding huge teak rafts downstream, for this is how all the timber from the forests in the north is taken to Rangoon to be shipped to foreign lands. It was after reaching Mingun that their difficulties began. The river bank at this point is high above the water level, even when the river is in flood. How were they to raise the bell and take it to its destination, a mile inland? This was the first problem that confronted them, and they solved it in the simplest possible way. They waited till the river fell again during the winter months, and then they dug a canal. So when the river rose once more in the following year they were able to tow the raft to its appointed place.

But here another and a greater difficulty faced them. The farther end of the canal was some fifty or sixty feet below the level of the land, and somehow the mighty bell had to be raised. Neither men nor elephants could lift this mass of metal perpendicularly sixty feet. Yet they were undismayed. If the bell could not be pulled from above, it must be pushed from below; and if men and even elephants were too weak for such a Herculean labour, they knew of something yet more powerful. They used water. First they filled in the canal between the river and the raft, thus leaving the raft in a kind of deep well. Then the army of diggers became water-carriers, and an endless chain of men worked night and day, each carrying a bamboo water-pot which he filled at the river and emptied into the well. Others were engaged in shovelling back the excavated earth, which sank as mud to the bottom of the well. And gradually, inch by inch, the water rose, lifting its burden higher and higher until it reached the level of the land, when the monster bell was rolled on to dry ground.

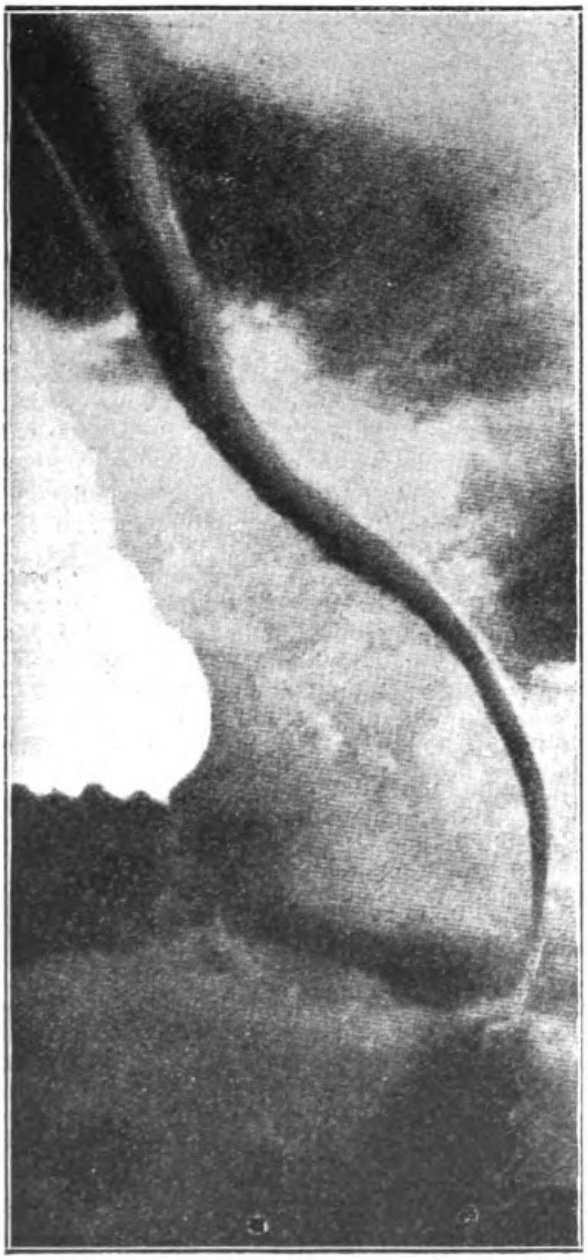
The labour was immense, the time extended to nearly two years, and the cost of maintaining so many workmen must have amounted to a very

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considerable sum. A modern engineering firm, provided with suitable machinery, would have done it in a few weeks or even a few days; but without machinery we may well doubt whether they could have done it at all. For modern engineers are so accustomed to have powerful engines at their disposal that they feel lost without them.

There yet remains one puzzle unexplained connected with the bell. Not far from the kiosk where it now hangs is an enormous rectangular pile of earth and brickwork with vertical sides. The original intention had been to place the bell on the top of this great structure. But a devastating earthquake that occurred soon after it was finished caused it to crack from top to bottom, and rendered it unsafe. How did the Burmese propose to lift the bell on to the top of this artificial mountain? That is an unsolved mystery. Yet they must have known how they meant to do it, for all the cost and trouble of bringing it from the other side of the Irrawaddy was incurred with this deliberate intention.

THE BEST PHOTOGRAPH OF A TORNADO EVER TAKEN.



THE art of photographing tornadoes is still in its infancy, and the accompanying photograph of one is probably the clearest and best ever taken. Mrs. Charles S. Aldrich, of Elmwood, Neb., writes us that it was taken at that place on April 6th, 1919, by a schoolboy, whose camera was too small to get all the funnel in one picture: hence he took the upper and lower parts separately in quick succession, and a professional photographer put the two negatives together. The dark splotch at the lower end of the funnel is where a farmhouse of stucco is being twisted off its foundations. The writer says:—

"When we first saw the upper part of the cloud it looked like a huge column of smoke, so that our first thought was of a big fire. But immediately the noise, like a terrific rattling, gave us the knowledge that it was a tornado. It was preceded by a hailstorm, but there was no rain or hail while the cloud itself passed near the town. It came within a quarter of a mile, apparently headed straight for us, and then appeared to veer in its course. It destroyed many farm buildings, leaving things in kindling-wood where it passed. We watched it flatten out and dissipate itself, as smoke would, all over the landscape."

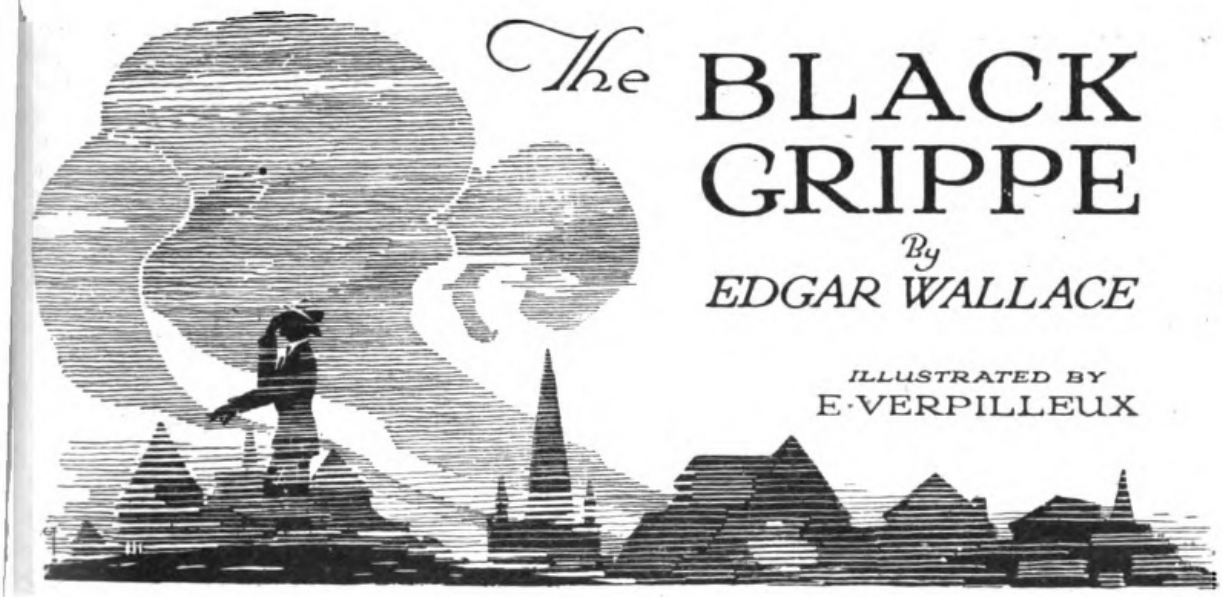
A tornado is a waterspout on land. It is a very powerful local vortex in the air, always beginning at a considerable level above the earth and working downward. Within the vortex the air is rarefied by centrifugal action, and is cooled in consequence of its rarefaction. This cooling causes the moisture in the air to condense in the form of a more or less funnel-shaped cloud, which shows the position of the vortex. The actual shape of the cloud varies.

The speed with which the air revolves in the tornado whirl has been estimated, from its effects on masonry and other structures in its path, at upwards of five hundred miles an hour in some cases. The tornado as a whole, however, travels over the ground at a much more moderate speed—perhaps forty miles an hour, on an average.

SOLUTIONS TO FEBRUARY CHESS CURIOSITIES.

No. 1.—1. Kt to Kt sq; fourteen variations. No. 2.—1. R to K 5; eleven variations.

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The BLACK GRIPPE

By EDGAR WALLACE

ILLUSTRATED BY E·VERPILLEUX

DR. HEREFORD BEVAN was looking thoughtfully at a small Cape rabbit; the rabbit took not the slightest notice of Dr. Hereford Bevan. It crouched on a narrow bench, nibbling at a mess of crushed mealies and seemed perfectly content with its lot, in spite of the fact that the bench was situated in the experimental laboratory of the Jackson Institute of Tropical Medicines.

In the young principal's hand was a long porcelain rod with which from time to time he menaced the unconscious feeder, without, however, producing so much as a single shiver of apprehension. With his long ears pricked, his sensitive nostrils quivering—he was used to the man-smell of Hereford Bevan by now—and his big black eyes staring unwinkingly ahead, there was little in the appearance of the rabbit to suggest abnormal condition.

For the third time in a quarter of an hour Bevan raised the rod as though to strike the animal across the nose, and for the third time lowered the rod again. Then with a sigh he lifted the little beast by the ears and carried him, struggling and squirming, to a small hutch, put him in very gently, and closed the wire-netted door.

He stood staring at the tiny inmate and fetched a long sigh. Then he left the laboratory and walked down to the staff study.

Stuart Gold, his assistant, sat at a big desk, pipe in mouth, checking some calculations. He looked up as Bevan came in.

"Well," he said, "what has Bunny done?"

"Bunny is feeding like a pig," said Bevan, irritably.

"No change?"

Bevan shook his head and looked at his watch.

"What time——" he began.

"The boat train was in ten minutes ago," said Stuart Gold. "I have been on the 'phone to Waterloo. He may be here at any minute now."

Bevan walked up and down the apartment, his hands thrust into his trousers pockets, his chin on his breast.

Presently he walked to the window and looked out at the busy street. Motor-buses were rumbling past in an endless procession. The side-walks were crowded with pedestrians, for this was the busiest thoroughfare in the West-end of London and it was the hour of the day when the offices were absorbing their slaves.

As he looked, a taxi drew up opposite the door and a man sprang out with all the agility of youth, though the iron-grey whiskers about his chin and the seamed red face placed him amongst the sixties.

"It is he!" cried Hereford Bevan, and dashed from the room to welcome the visitor, taking the portmanteau from his hand.

"It is awfully good of you to come, professor," he said, shaking the traveller warmly by the hand. "Ever since I telegraphed I have been scared sick for fear I brought you on a fool's errand."

"Nonsense," said the elder man, sharply; "I was coming to Europe anyway, and I merely advanced my date of sailing. I'd sooner come by the *Mauretania* than the slow packet by which I had booked. How are you? You are looking bright."

Hereford Bevan led the new-comer to the study and introduced him to Gold.

Professor Van der Bergh was one of those elderly men who never grow old. His blue eye was as clear as it had been on his twentieth birthday, his sensitive mouth was as ready to smile as ever it had been in the

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flower of his youth. A professor of pathology, a great anatomist, and one of the foremost bacteriologists in the United States, Bevan's doubts and apprehensions were perhaps justified, though he was relieved in mind to discover that he had merely accelerated the great man's departure from New York and was not wholly responsible for a trip which might end in disappointment.

"Now," said Van der Bergh, spreading his coat-tails and drawing his chair to the little fire, "just give me a second to light my pipe and tell me all your troubles."

He puffed away for a few seconds, blew out the match carefully and threw it into the grate, then before Bevan could speak he said:—

"I presume that the epidemic of January has scared you?"

Hereford Bevan nodded.

"Well," said the professor, reflectively, "I don't wonder. The 1918 epidemic was bad enough. I am not calling it influenza, because I think very few of us are satisfied to affix that wild label to a devastating disease which appeared in the most mysterious fashion, took its toll, and disappeared as rapidly and mysteriously."

He scratched his beard, staring out of the window.

"I haven't heard any theory about that epidemic which has wholly satisfied me," he said. "People talk glibly of 'carriers' of 'infection,' but who infected the wild tribes in the centre of Africa on the very day that whole communities of Eskimos were laid low in parts of the Arctic regions which were absolutely isolated from the rest of the world?"

Bevan shook his head.

"That is the mystery that I have never solved," he said, "and never hope to."

"I wouldn't say that," said the professor, shaking his head. "I am always hoping to get on the track of first causes, however baffling they may be. Anyway, I am not satisfied to describe that outbreak as influenza, and it really does not matter what label we give to it for the moment. You might as truly call it the Plague or the Scourge. Now let's get down to the epidemic of this year. I should like to compare notes with you because I have always found that the reports of this Institute are above suspicion. I suppose it has been suggested to you," he went on, "that the investigation of this particular disease is outside the province of tropical medicines?"

Stuart Gold laughed.

"We are reminded of that every day," he said, dryly.

"Now just tell me what happened in January of this year," said the professor.

Dr. Bevan seated himself at the table, pulled open a drawer, and took out a black-covered exercise book.

"I'll tell you briefly," he said, "and without attempting to produce statistics. On the 18th January, as near three o'clock in the afternoon as makes no difference, the second manifestation of this disease attacked this country, and, so far as can be ascertained, the whole of the Continent."

The professor nodded.

"What were the symptoms?" he asked.

"People began to cry—that is to say, their eyes filled with water and they felt extremely uncomfortable for about a quarter of an hour. So far as I can discover the crying period did not last much more than a quarter of an hour, in some cases a much shorter time."

Again the professor nodded.

"That is what happened in New York," he said, "and this symptom was followed about six hours later by a slight rise of temperature, shivering, and a desire for sleep."

"Just the same sort of thing happened here," said Bevan, "and in the morning everybody was as well as they had been the previous morning, and the fact that it had occurred might have been overlooked but for the observation made in various hospitals. Gold and I were both stricken at the same time. We both took blood and succeeded in isolating the germs."

The professor jumped up.

"Then you are the only people who have it," he said, "nobody else in the world seems to have taken that precaution."

Stuart Gold lifted a big bell-shaped glass cover from a microscope, took from a locked case a thin microscopic slide, and inserted it in the holder. He adjusted the lens, switched on a shaded light behind the instrument, and beckoned the professor forward.

"Here it is, sir," he said.

Professor Van der Bergh glued his eye to the instrument and looked for a long time.

"Perfect," he said. "I have never seen this fellow before. It looks rather like a trypnasome."

"That's what I told Bevan," said Stuart Gold.

The professor was still looking.

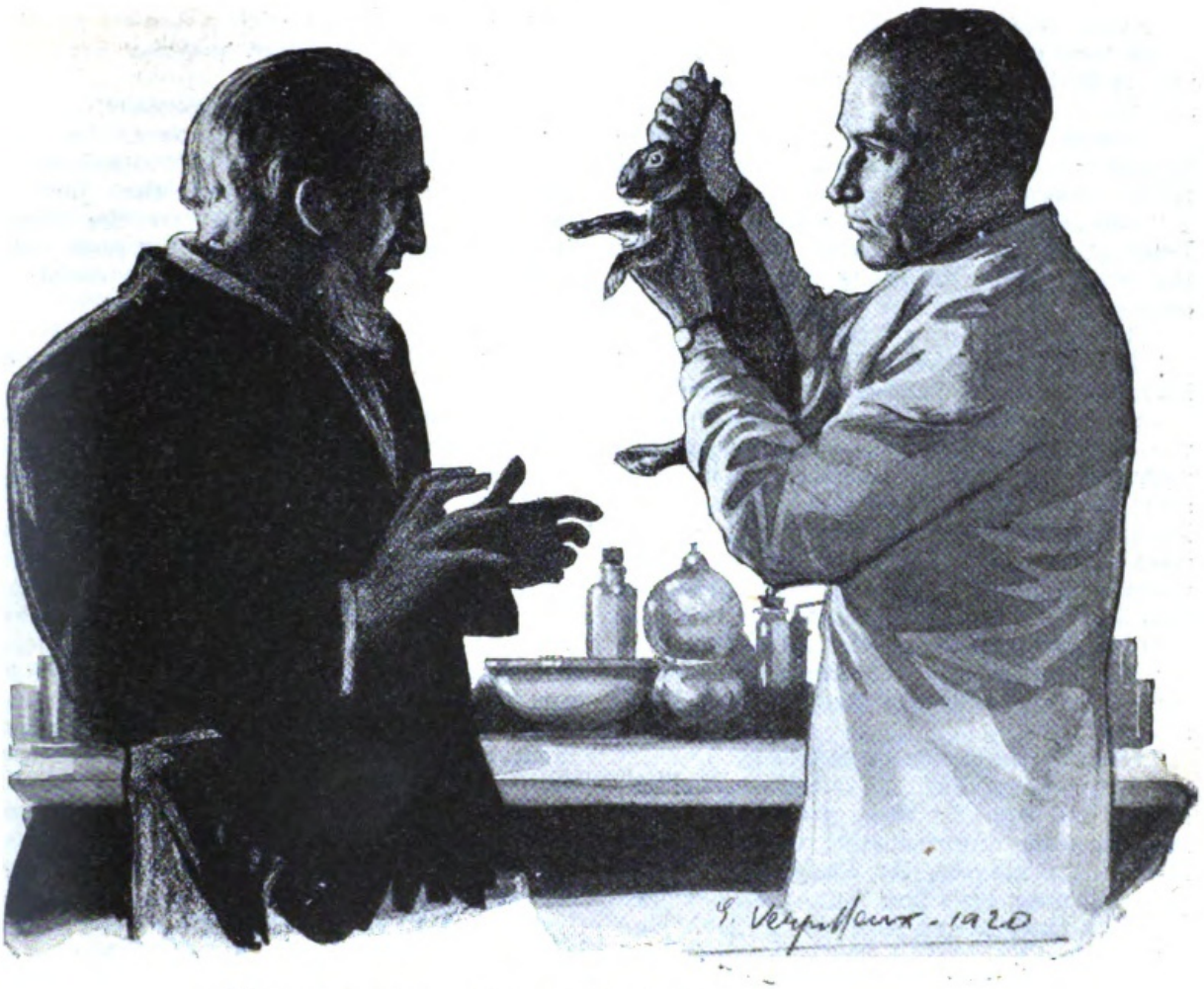
"It is like and it is unlike," he said. "Of course, it is absurd to suggest that you've all had an attack of sleeping sickness, which you undoubtedly would have had if this had been a trypnasome, but surely this bug is a new one to me!"

He walked back to his chair, puffing thoughtfully at his pipe.

"What did you do?"

"I made a culture," said Bevan, "and infected six South African rabbits. In an

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"'DO YOU NOTICE ANYTHING?' HE ASKED.
"'GOOD HEAVENS!' SAID VAN DER BERGH; 'HE'S BLIND!'"

hour they developed the first symptoms. Their eyes watered for the prescribed time, their temperature rose six hours later, and in the morning they were all well."

"Why South African rabbits?" asked Van der Bergh, curiously.

"Because they develop secondary symptoms of any disease at twice the rate of a human being—at least that has been my experience," explained Bevan. "I found it by accident whilst I was in Grahamstown, in South Africa, and it has been a very useful piece of knowledge to me. When I wired to you I had no idea there were going to be any further developments. I merely wanted to make you acquainted with the bug——"

The professor looked up sharply.

"Have there been further developments?" he asked, and Bevan nodded.

'Five days ago," he said, speaking slowly, "the second symptom appeared. I will show you."

He led the way back to the laboratory, went to the little hutch, and lifted the twisting, struggling rabbit to the bench under a blaze of electric light. The professor felt the animal gingerly.

"He has no temperature," he said, "and looks perfectly normal. What is the matter with him?"

Bevan lifted the little beast and held his head toward the light.

"Do you notice anything?" he asked.

"Good heavens!" said Van der Bergh; "he's blind!"

Bevan nodded.

"He's been blind for five days," he said.

"But——" Van der Bergh stared at him. "Do you mean——"

Bevan nodded.

"I mean, that when the secondary symptom comes, and it should come in a fortnight from to-day——"

He stopped.

He had replaced the animal upon the bench and had put out his hand to stroke his ears when suddenly the rabbit groped back from him. Again he reached out his hand and again the animal made a frantic attempt to escape.

"He sees now," said the professor.

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"Wait," said Bevan.

He took down a board to which a paper was pinned, looked at his watch, and jotted a note.

"Thank God for that," he said; "the blindness lasts for exactly one hundred and twenty hours."

"But do you mean," asked Van der Bergh, with an anxious little frown, "that the whole world is going blind for five days?"

"That is my theory," replied the other.

"Phew!" said the professor, and mopped his face with a large and gaudy handkerchief.

They went back without another word to the study and Van der Bergh began his technical test. For his information sheet after sheet of data were placed before him. Records of temperature, of diet and the like were scanned and compared, whilst Bevan made his way to another laboratory to examine the remaining rabbits.

He returned as the professor finished.

"They can all see," he said; "I inspected them this morning and they were as blind as bats."

Presently the professor finished.

"I am going down to our Embassy," he said, "and the best thing you boys can do is to see some representative of your Government. Let me see, Sir Douglas Sexton is your big man, isn't he?"

Bevan made a wry face.

"He is the medical gentleman who has the ear of the Government," he said, "but he is rather an impossible person. He's one of the old school——"

"I know that school," said the professor, grimly, "it's a school where you learn nothing and forget nothing. Still, it's your duty to warn him."

Bevan nodded and turned to Stuart Gold.

"Will you cancel my lecture, Gold?" he said; "let Cartwright take the men through that demonstration I gave yesterday. I'll go down and see Sexton though he wither me!"

Sir Douglas Sexton had a large house in a very large square. He was so well-off that he could afford a shabby butler. That shrunken man shook his head when Dr. Bevan made his inquiry.

"I don't think Sir Douglas will see you, sir," he said. "He has a consultation in half an hour's time and he is in his library, with orders that he is not to be disturbed in any circumstances."

"This is a very vital matter and I simply must see Sir Douglas," said Bevan, firmly.

The butler was gone for some time and presently returned to usher the caller into a large and gloomy room, where Sir Douglas sat surrounded by open books.

He greeted Bevan with a scowl, for the younger school were not popular with the Sextonians.

"Really, it is most inconvenient, doctor, for you to see me at this moment," he complained, "I suppose you want to ask about the Government grant to the Jackson Institute. I was speaking to the Prime Minister yesterday and he did not seem at all inclined to agree to spend the country's money——"

"I haven't come about the grant, Sir Douglas," replied Bevan, "but a matter of much greater importance."

In as few words as possible he gave the result of his experiment, and on the face of Sir Douglas Sexton was undisguised incredulity.

"Come, come," he said, when Dr. Bevan had finished, and permitted his heavy features to relax into a smile. "Now, that sort of stuff is all very well for the Press if you want to make a sensation and advertise your name, but surely you are not coming to me, a medical man, and a medical man, moreover, in the confidence of the Government and the Ministry of Health, with a story of that kind! Of course, there was some sort of epidemic, I admit, on the 18th. I myself suffered a little inconvenience, but I think that phenomena could be explained by the sudden change of wind from the south-west to the north-east and the corresponding drop in temperature. You may have noticed that the temperature dropped six degrees that morning."

"I am not bothering about the cause of the epidemic," said Bevan, patiently. "I am merely giving you, Sir Douglas, a rough account of what form the second epidemic will take."

Sir Douglas smiled.

"And do you expect me," he asked with acerbity, "to go to the Prime Minister of England and tell him that in fourteen days the whole of the world is going blind? My dear good man, if you published that sort of story you would scare the people to death and set back the practice of medicine a hundred years! Why, we should all be discredited!"

"Do you think that if I saw the Prime Minister——" began Bevan, and Sir Douglas stiffened.

"If you know the Prime Minister or have any friends who could introduce you," he said, shortly, "I have not the slightest objection to your seeing him. I can only warn you that the Prime Minister is certain to send for me and that I should give an opinion which would be directly contrary to yours. I think you have made a very grave error, Dr. Bevan, and if you were to take the trouble to kill one of your precious rabbits

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and dissect it you would discover another cause for this blindness."

"The opinion of Dr. Van der Bergh," began Bevan, and Sir Douglas snorted.

"I really cannot allow an American person to teach me my business," he said. "I have nothing to say against American medicines or American surgery, and there are some very charming people in America—I am sure this must be the case. And now, doctor, if you will excuse——"

He turned pointedly to his books and Bevan went out.

For seven days three men worked most earnestly to enlist the attention of the authorities. They might have given the story to the Press and created a sensation, but neither Bevan nor Van der Bergh favoured this method. Eminent doctors who were consulted took views which were extraordinarily different. Some came to the laboratories to examine the records. Others "pooh-poohed" the whole idea.

"Have you any doubt on the matter yourself?" asked the professor, and Bevan hesitated.

"The only doubt I have, sir," he said, "is whether my calculations as to the time are accurate. I have noticed in previous experiments with these rabbits the disease develops about twice as fast as in the human body, but I am far from satisfied that this rule is invariable."

Van der Bergh nodded.

"My Embassy has wired the particulars to Washington," he said, "and Washington takes a very serious view of your discovery. They are making whatever preparations they can."

He went back to his hotel, promising to call on the morrow. Bevan worked all that day testing the blood of his little subjects, working out tables of reaction, and it was nearly four o'clock when he went to bed.

He slept that night in his room at the Institute. He was a good sleeper, and after winding the clock and drawing down the blind he jumped into bed and in less than five minutes was sound asleep. He awoke with the subconscious feeling that he had slept his usual allowance and was curiously alive and awake. The room was in pitch darkness and he remembered with a frown that he had not gone to bed until four o'clock in the morning. He could not have slept two hours.

He put out his hand and switched on the light to discover the time. Apparently the light was not working.

On his bedside table was a box of matches, his cigarette holder, and his cigarettes. He took the box, struck a light, but nothing happened. He threw away the match and struck another—still nothing happened.

He held the faithless match in his hand and suddenly felt a strange warmth at his finger-tips. Then with a cry he dropped the match—it had burnt his fingers!

Slowly he put his legs over the edge of the bed and stood up, groping his way to the window and releasing the spring-blind. The darkness was still complete. He strained his eyes but could not even see the silhouette of the window-frame against the night. Then a church-bell struck the hour . . . nine, ten, eleven, twelve!

Twelve o'clock! It was impossible that it could be twelve o'clock at night. He gasped. Twelve midday and dark!

He searched for his clothes and began to dress. His window was open, yet from outside came no sound of traffic. London was silent—as silent as the grave.

His window looked out upon the busy thoroughfare in which the Jackson Institute was situated, but there was not so much as the clink of a wheel or the sound of a pedestrian's foot.

He dressed awkwardly, slipping on his boots and lacing them quickly, then groped his way to the door and opened it. A voice outside greeted him. It was the voice of Gold.

"Is that you, Bevan?"

"Yes, it is I, what the dickens——" and then the realization of the catastrophe which had fallen upon the world came to him.

"Blind!" he whispered. "We're all blind!"

Gold had been shell-shocked in the war and was subject to nerve-storms. Presently Bevan heard his voice whimpering hysterically.

"Blind!" he repeated. "What a horrible thing!"

"Steady yourself!" said Bevan, sternly. "It has come! But it's only for five days, Gold. Now don't lose your nerve!"

"Oh, I sha'n't lose my nerve!" said Gold, in a shaky voice. "Only it is rather awful, isn't it? Awful, awful! My God! It's awful!"

"Come down to the study!" said Bevan. "Don't forget the two steps leading down to the landing. There are twenty-four stairs, Gold. Count 'em!"

He was half-way down the stairs when he heard somebody sobbing at the foot and recognized the voice of the old housekeeper who attended to the resident staff. She was whimpering and wailing.

"Shut up!" he said, savagely. "What are you making that infernal row about?"

"Oh, sir," she moaned. "I can't see! I can't see!"

"Nobody can see or will see for five days!" said Bevan. "Keep your nerve, Mrs. Moreland."

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He found his way to the study. He had scarcely reached the room before he heard a thumping on the door which led from the street to the staff quarters. Carefully he manœuvred his way into the hall again, came to the door, and unlocked it.

"Halloa," said a cheery voice outside, "is this the Jackson Institute?"

"Thank God you're safe, professor. You took a risk in coming round."

The professor came in with slow, halting footsteps, and Bevan shut the door behind him.

"You know your way, I'll put my hand on your shoulder, if you don't mind," said Van der Bergh. "Luckily I took the trouble to remember the route. I've been two hours getting here. Ouch?"

"Are you hurt?" asked Bevan.

"I ran against an infernal motor-bus in the middle of the street. It had been left stranded," said the professor. "I think the blindness is general."

Stuart had stumbled into the room soon after them, had found a chair and sat down upon it.

"Now," said Van der Bergh, briskly, "you've got to find your way to your Government offices and interview somebody in authority. There's going to be hell in the world for the next five days. I hope your calculations are not wrong in that respect, Bevan!"

Hereford Bevan said nothing.

"It is very awkward!" it was Gold's quivering voice that spoke, "but, of course, it'll be all right in a day or two."

"I hope so," said the professor's grim voice. "If it's for five days little harm will be done, but—but if it's for ten days!"

Bevan's heart sank at the doubt in the old man's voice.

"If it's for ten days?" he repeated.

"The whole world will be dead," said the professor, solemnly, and there was a deep silence.

"Dead?" whispered Gold and Van der Bergh swung round toward the voice.

"What's the matter with you?"

"Shell-shock," muttered Bevan under his breath, and the old man's voice took on a softer note.

"Not all of us, perhaps," he said, "but the least intelligent. Don't you realize what has happened and what will happen? The world is going to starve. We are a blind world, and how shall we find food?"

A thrill of horror crept up Bevan's spine as he realized for the first time just what world-blindness meant.

"All the trains have stopped," the professor went on; "I've been figuring it out in my room this morning just what it means. There are blind men in the signal-boxes and blind men on the engines. All transport has come to a standstill. How are you going to get the food to the people? In a day's time the shops, if the people can reach them, will be sold out and it will be impossible to replenish the local stores. You can neither milk nor reap. All the great power-stations are at a standstill. There is no coal being got out of the mines. Wait, where is your telephone?"

Bevan fumbled for the instrument and passed it in the direction of the professor's voice. A pause, then:—

"Take it back," said the professor, "of course, that will not be working. The exchange cannot see!"

Bevan heard a methodical puff-puff and the scent of tobacco came to him, and somehow this brought him comfort. The professor was smoking.

He rose unsteadily to his feet.

"Put your hand on my shoulder, professor, and, Gold, take hold of the professor's coat or something."

"Where are you going?" asked Van der Bergh.

"To the kitchen," said Bevan; "there's some food there and I'm starving."

The meal consisted in the main of dry bread, biscuits, and cheese, washed down by water. Then Hereford Bevan began his remarkable pilgrimage.

He left the house, and keeping touch with the railings on his right, reached first Cockspur Street and then Whitehall. Halfway along the latter thoroughfare he thumped into a man and, putting out his hand, felt embossed buttons.

"Halloa," he said, "a policeman?"

"That's right, sir," said a voice; "I've been here since the morning. You're in Whitehall. What has happened, sir? Do you know?"

"It is a temporary blindness which has come upon everybody," said Bevan, speaking quickly. "I am a doctor. Now, constable, you are to tell your friends if you meet them and everybody you do meet that it is only temporary."

"I'm not likely to meet anybody," said the constable. "I've been standing here hardly daring to move since it came."

"What time did it happen?"

"About ten o'clock, as near as I can remember," said the policeman.

"How far from here is Downing Street?"

The constable hesitated.

"I don't know where we are," he said, "but it can't be very far."

Two hours' diligent search, two hours of groping and of stumbling, two hours of discussing with frantic men and women whom he met on the way, brought him to Downing Street.

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That journey along Whitehall would remain in his mind a horrible memory for all his days. He heard oaths and sobbings. He heard the wild jabberings of somebody —whether it was man or woman he could not say—who had gone mad under the stress of the calamity, and he came to Downing Street as the clock struck three.

He might have passed the Prime Minister's house but he heard voices and recognized one as that of Sexton.

The great man was moaning his trouble to somebody who spoke in a quiet unemotional voice.

"Halloa, Sexton!"

Bevan stumbled toward, and collided with, the great physician.

"Who is it?" said Sexton.

"It is Hereford Bevan."

"It's the man, Prime Minister, the doctor I spoke to you about."

A cool hand took Bevan's.

"Come this way," said the voice; "you had better stay, Sexton, you'll never find your way back."

Bevan found himself led through what he judged to be a large hall and then suddenly his feet struck a heavy carpet.

"I think there's a chair behind you," said the new voice, "sit down and tell me all about it."

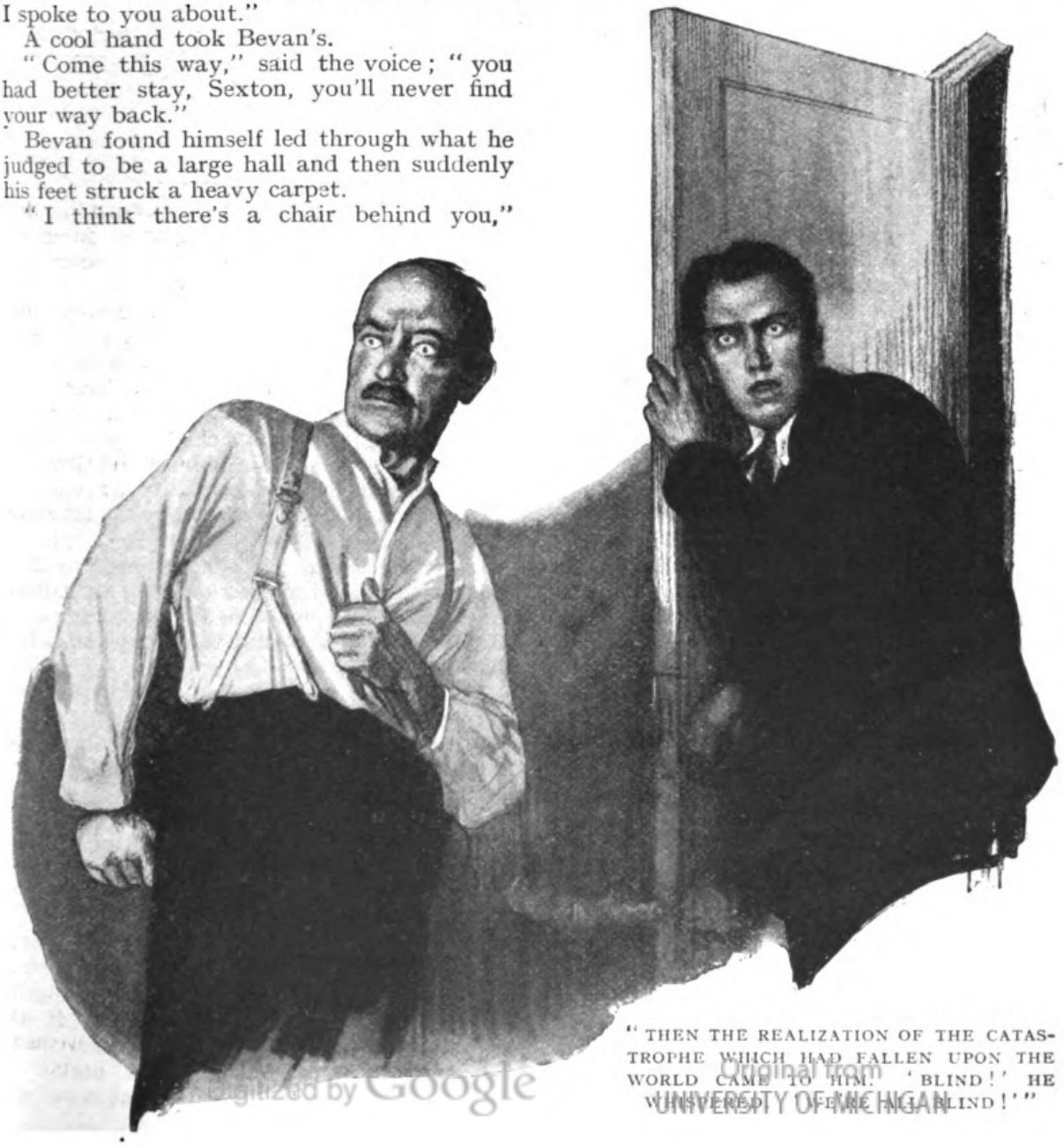
Dr. Bevan spoke for ten minutes, his host merely interjecting a question here and there.

"It can only last for five days," said the voice, with a quiver of emotion, "and we can only last out that five days. You know, of course, that the food supply has stopped. There is no way of averting this terrible tragedy. Can you make a suggestion?"

"Yes, sir," said Bevan. "There are a number of blind institutes throughout the country. Get in touch with them and let their trained men organize the business of industry. I think it could be done."

There was a pause.

"It might be done," said the voice. "Happily the telegraphs are working satis-



"THEN THE REALIZATION OF THE CATASTROPHE WHICH HAD FALLEN UPON THE WORLD CAME TO HIM. 'BLIND!' HE WHISPERED. 'BLIND!'"

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"TWO HOURS' DILIGENT SEARCH, TWO HOURS OF GROPING AND OF STUMBLING, BROUGHT HIM HORRIBLE MEMORY

factorily, as messages can be taken by sound. The wireless is also working and your suggestion shall be carried out."

The days that followed were days of nightmare, days when men groped and stumbled in an unknown world, shrieking for food. On the evening of the second day the water supply failed. The pumping stations had ceased to work. Happily it rained and people were able to collect water in their mackintosh coats.

Dr. Bevan made several excursions a day and in one of these he met another bold adventurer who told him that part of the Strand was on fire. Somebody had upset a lamp without noticing the fact. The doctor made his way toward the Strand but was forced to turn back by the clouds of pungent smoke which met him.

He and his informant (he was a butcher from Smithfield) locked arms and made their way back to the Institute. By some mischance they took a wrong turning and might have been irretrievably lost but they found a guardian angel in the shape of a woman against whom they blundered.

"The Jackson Institute?" she said. "Oh yes, I can lead you there."

She walked with unfaltering footsteps and with such decision that the doctor thought she had been spared the supreme affliction. He asked her this and she laughed.

"Oh, no," she said, cheerfully. "You see, I've been blind all my life. The Government has put us on point duty at various places to help people who have lost their way."

She told them that, according to her information, big fires were raging in half-a-dozen parts of London. She had heard of no railway collisions and the Prime Minister told her——

"Told you?" said Bevan in surprise, and again she laughed.

"I've met him before, you see," she said. "I am Lord Selbury's daughter, Lillian Selbury."

Bevan remembered the name. It is curious that he had pictured her, for all the beauty of her voice, as a sad, middle-aged woman. She took his hand in hers and they walked slowly toward his house.

"You'll think I'm horrid if I say I am enjoying this," she said, "and yet I am. It's so lovely to be able to pity others! Of course, it is very dreadful and it is beginning to frighten me a little, and then there's nobody to tell me how pretty I am, because nobody can see. That is rather

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TO DOWNING STREET. THAT JOURNEY ALONG WHITEHALL WOULD REMAIN IN HIS MIND A FOR ALL HIS DAYS."

a drawback, isn't it?" and she laughed again.

"What does the Government think about this?"

"They are terribly upset," she said, in a graver tone; "you see, they cannot get at the people—they are so used to depending on the newspapers, but there are no newspapers now, and if there were nobody could read them. They have just stopped—— You step down from the kerb here and walk twenty-five paces and step up again. We are crossing Whitehall Gardens. They have wonderful faith in this Dr. Bevan."

Hereford Bevan felt himself going red.

"I hope their faith is justified," he said, grimly; "I happen to be the wonderful doctor."

He felt her fingers grip him in an uncontrollable spasm of surprise.

"Are you really?" she said, with a new note of interest. "Listen!"

They stopped, and he heard the tinkle of a bell.

"That is one of our people from St. Mildreds," she said; "the Government is initiating a system of town-criers. It is the only way we can get news to the people."

Bevan listened and heard the sing-song voice of the crier but could not distinguish what he said. The girl led him to his house and there left him. He felt her hand running down his right arm and wondered why until she took his hand and shook it.

Old Professor Van der Bergh roared a greeting as he came into the room.

"Is that you, Bevan?" he asked. "I've got a knuckle of cold ham here, but be careful how you cut it, otherwise you're going to slice your fingers."

He and Stuart Gold had spent the day feeding the various specimens in the laboratory. The fourth day dawned and in the afternoon came a knock at the door. It was the girl.

"I've been ordered to place myself at your disposal, Dr. Bevan," she said; "the Government may need you."

He spent that day wandering through the deserted streets with the girl at his side, and as the hundred and twentieth hour approached he found himself looking forward, not so much to the end of the tragic experience which he shared with the world, but to seeing with his own eyes the face of this guide of his. He had slept the clock round and just before ten struck he made his way to the street. He heard Big Ben boom the hour and waited for light, but no light came. Another hour passed and yet

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another, and his soul was seized with blind panic. Suppose sight never returned, suppose his experiments were altogether wrong and that what happened in the case of the rabbits did not happen to Man! Suppose the blindness was permanent! He groaned at the thought.

The girl was with him, her arm in his, throughout that day. His nerves were breaking, and somehow she sensed this fact and comforted him as a mother might comfort a child. She led him into the park with sure footsteps and walked him up and down, trying to distract his mind from the horror with which it was oppressed.

In the afternoon he was sent for to the Cabinet Council and again told the story of his experiments.

"The hundred and twenty hours are passed, are they not, doctor?" said the Premier's voice.

"Yes, sir," replied Bevan in a low voice, "but it is humanly impossible to be sure that that is the exact time."

No other question was asked him but the terror of his audience came back to him like an aura and shrivelled his very heart.

He did not lie down as was his wont that night, but wandered out alone into the streets of London. It must have been two o'clock in the morning when he came back to find the girl standing on the step talking with Van der Bergh.

She came toward him at the sound of his voice.

"There is another Cabinet meeting, doctor," she said, "will you come with me?"

"I hope I haven't kept you long," he said, brokenly. His voice was husky and so unlike his own that she was startled.

"You're not to take this to heart, Dr. Bevan," she said, severely, as they began their pilgrimage to Whitehall. "There's a terrible task waiting for the world which has to be faced."

"Wait, wait!" he said, hoarsely, and gripped the rail with one hand and her arm with the other.

Was it imagination? It was still dark, a fine drizzle of rain was falling, but the blackness was dappled with tones of less blackness. There was a dark, straight thing before him, something that seemed to hang in the centre of his eye, and a purple shape beyond, and he knew that he was looking at a London street, at a London lamp-post, with eyes that saw. Black London, London devoid of light, London whose streets were packed with motionless vehicles that stood just where they had stopped on the day the darkness fell, London with groping figures half mad with joy, shrieking and sobbing their relief—he drew a long breath.

"What is it? What is it?" said the girl in a frightened voice.

"I can see! I can see!" said Bevan in a whisper.

"Can you?" she said, wistfully. "I—I am so glad. And now——"

He was near to tears and his arms went about her. He fumbled in his pocket for a match and struck a light. That blessed light he saw, and saw, too, the pale spiritual face turned up to his.

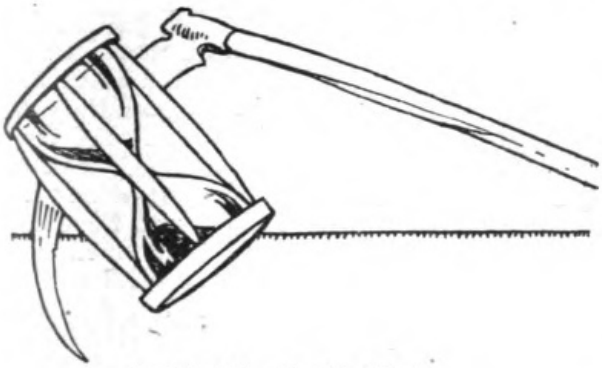
"I can see you," he whispered again. "My God! You're the most beautiful thing I have ever seen!"

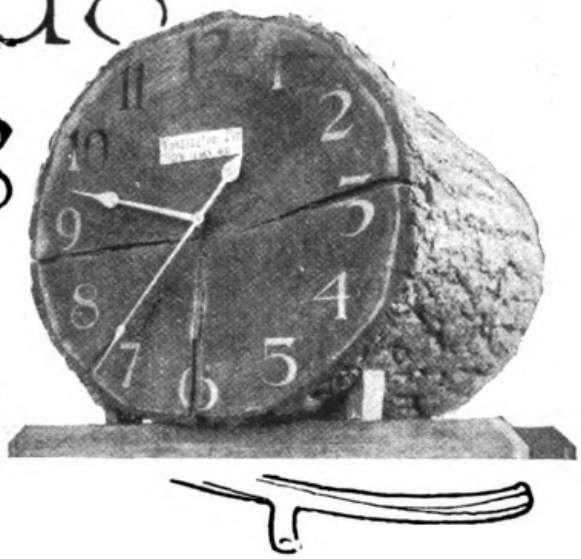
London slept from sheer force of habit and woke with the grey dawn to see—to look out upon a world that had been lost for five and a half days, but in the night all the forces of the law and the Crown had been working at feverish pace, railways had dragged their drivers from their beds, carriers and stokers had been collected by the police, and slowly the wheels of life were turning again, and a humble world, grateful for the restoration of its greatest gift, hungered in patience and was happy.

The important series of articles by Sir A. Conan Doyle, which, under the general name of "The Uncharted Coast," cover different phases of psychic knowledge, have been unfortunately held up owing to the printers' strike in New York, which has stood in the way of simultaneous publication. They have been delivered by the Author, and will be resumed as soon as possible.

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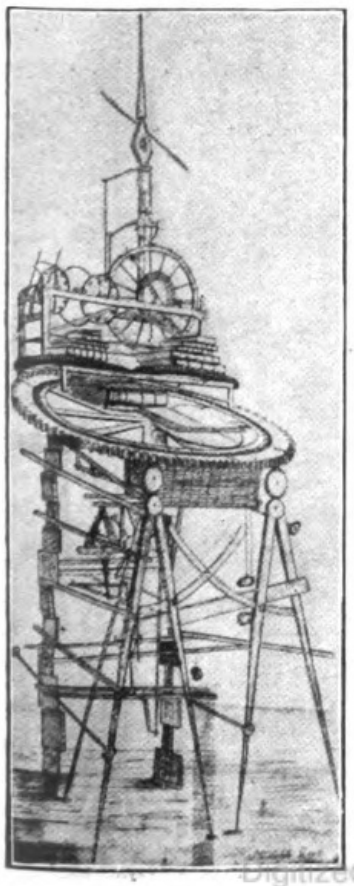
Curious Clocks





Muir's Wonderful Clock.

ONE of the most famous clocks in the world is that which belonged to the late John Muir, the noted naturalist and explorer. This clock, which has been presented to the Wisconsin State Historical Society's Museum, was used by Muir during his schooldays in the early 'sixties. Because of his desire to work, he kept late hours, and therefore found it hard to get up. First he tried tying a string to his toes and getting his janitor to pull it at five in the morning. This worked all right until some of the students nearly pulled him out of bed. Then he built a clock which would do the work.



He built a bed of pine-boards, with three legs, two at the head and one at the foot. The leg at the foot was in two sections and operated on an elbow. This elbow was held by a peg so that if the peg was released the bed would drop to an angle of forty-five degrees. A strong cord, fastened to the peg, led to the clock; on the end of the cord near the clock was a large stone. Before retiring, the cord was attached to the clock, and at five in the morning the clock would do its daily work. The noise of Muir falling out of bed, and the falling stone, awakened everyone in the building.

While teaching in a country school-house he used the clock to start a fire before the arrival of the pupils at the school. The clock was arranged to upset a tube of sulphuric acid into a mixture of chlorate of potash and sugar, placed under the kindling and wood the night before. Instant combustion ensued.

He also used this clock to open and shut his books when he wished to study. By arranging his books in a small car which operated on his table they assorted themselves in a certain order, and were placed before him at a stated time by the movement of the clock.

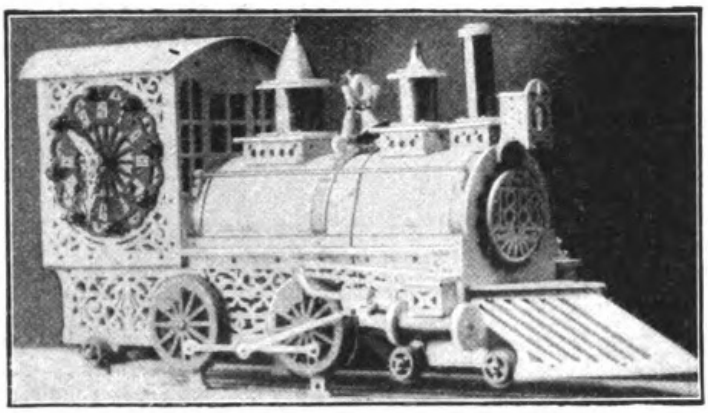
Made of Logs.

Everybody stops to look at this clock (shown at the top of this page), the works of which are encased in a hollow section of a fir log from a tree about two hundred and fifty years old. The section of the log admirably serves as a dial. The appearance of the clock is not its only claim to distinction. Its size also warrants more than ordinary interest, the dial being more than three and a half feet in diameter, and the minute-hand more than two feet in length.

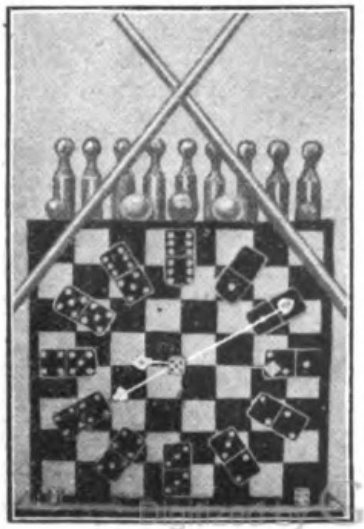
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Shaped Like a Locomotive.

Quite a curious clock has been constructed by a Kansas mechanic in the form of a miniature locomotive. The dial, which is made of imitation ebony, is fixed on one side of the highly ornate cab of the engine, and is studded with small ruby and green-coloured incandescent lamps. The interior



of the cab is supplied with several other tiny globes, while the headlight, which is fitted with both a reflector and lens, also mounts a lamp. A switch controlled by the clock automatically turns the current on at six o'clock in the evening and cuts it off twelve hours later. The headlight, the lamps in the cab, and those on the face of the clock are wired in separate circuits. Each of these groups is flashed independently of the others at intervals of about fifteen seconds, and remains lighted for a period of approximately three seconds. The clock is of standard make and of the eight-day type. It strikes the hours and half-hours by ringing the engine-bell, and, while doing this, turns the driving-wheels of the locomotive, which do not touch the tiny rock-ballasted track on which they apparently rest. A manual switch at the rear of the cab provides an auxiliary control of the lamps.

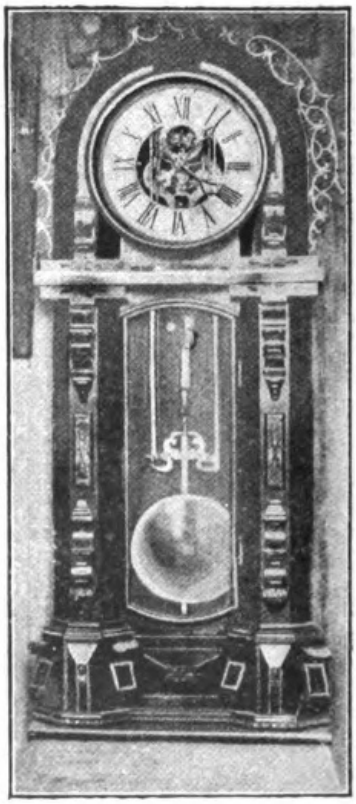


"The Gambler's Clock."

"The Gambler's Clock" would be an appropriate name for a timepiece which appears to have been made with all the implements for gaming that could be secured. A draughts-board furnishes it with a face, the numbers on which are made with dominoes of appropriate denomination. The minute-hand is tipped with the figure of a "heart," and at its short end is a "club." A "diamond" serves to point the hours for the hour-hand, while a "spade" forms the other end of this hand. The hands are fastened to the clock with a dice, while the top is ornamented with a row of ninepins and billiard-balls. Over all a couple of short billiard-cues are crossed.

Clock That Never Stops.

The only piece of machinery in the world to be operated entirely by electrical forces drawn from the earth is now running in the office of Chas. Drawbaugh, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. It has been in continuous operation since 1870, with the exception of a short period involved in its transfer to several different localities. In the late 'sixties the father of Mr. Drawbaugh conceived the idea of a perfect clock under the guidance of latent electricity in the earth. Time has shown that Mr. Drawbaugh has come closer



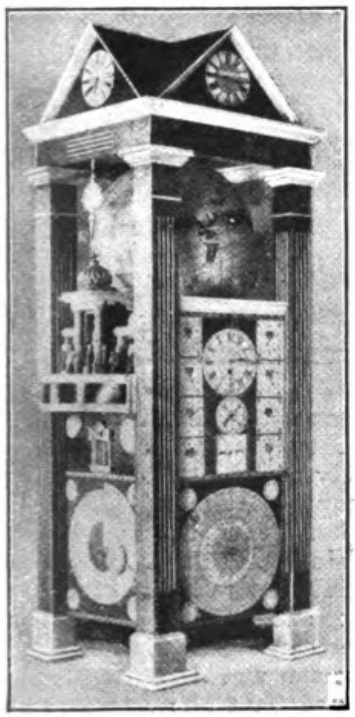
to perpetual motion than any other inventor. In this timepiece, which stands six feet in height, the forty-five-pound pendulum is the motor. It is suspended on an edged pivot of hardened steel and operated by an ordinary permanent magnet and an electro-magnet, the wire of which runs into the ground, the earth becoming the battery

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feeding the electro-magnet. In erecting the clock it was necessary to dig a hole in the earth about three feet in diameter and six feet deep. Metal plates are placed in the hole with enough coke to hold moisture, and the timepiece can be set so that it will not gain or lose two seconds in a year.

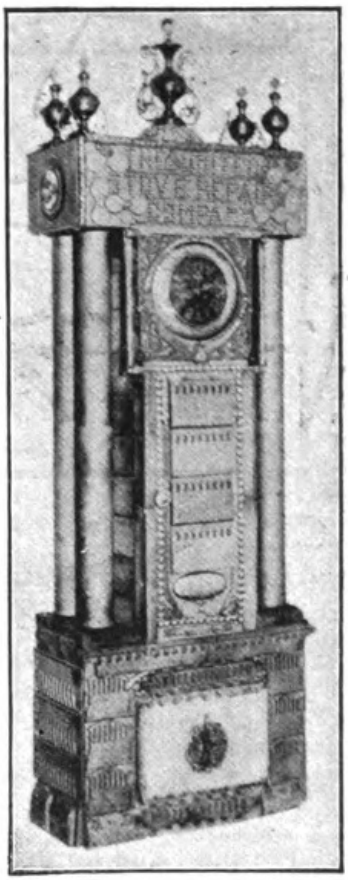
An Encyclopædic Clock.

Parts of this clock, made by Mr. Frank Friede, of Colville, Washington, were collected from every country on the globe. It is ten feet high, three feet square, has one hundred and eight dials, shows the time, size, flag, form of government, postage stamps, lowest coin, and the name of the capital city of each country in the world, as well as languages. The globe is made of a crust of Portland cement one inch in thickness, is three feet in diameter, and weighs one hundred and fifty pounds. This globe makes a complete revolution every twenty-four hours. The moon is also shown in relative size, making its revolution in twenty-nine and a half days. This remarkable clock shows the phases of the moon, together with the eclipses of both sun and moon. The astronomic phases of the clock show, in addition to the movements of the planets, their relative sizes and distances. The clock has more than five hundred wheels, with numerous levers, springs, etc. It is made of odds and ends from old sewing-machines, discarded phonographs, umbrellas, hat-pins, and the like.



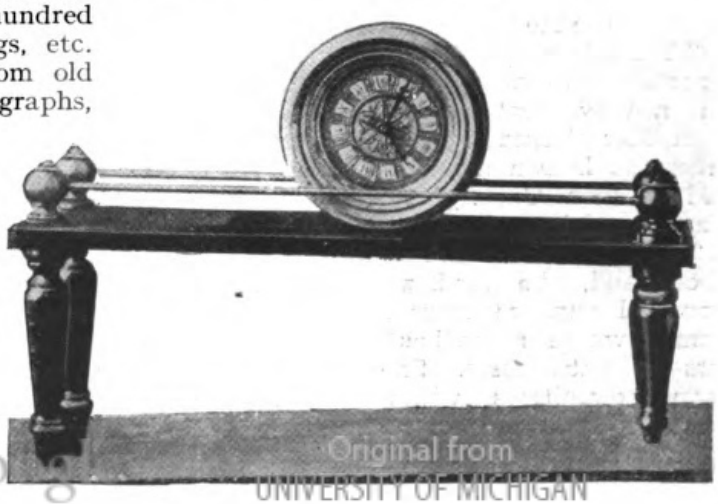
Clock from Stove Repairs.

A stove repairs firm in Philadelphia has constructed a grandfather clock from material used in the making of a stove. It stands eight feet four inches high and is thirty-four inches wide. The dial, made of mica, is eight inches across. The words "Stove Repairs," composed of twelve letters, are used in place of figures on the dial. An eight-day movement has been installed that keeps accurate time, and by means of an electric light placed behind the works the face is brightly illuminated. The hands are made in an artistic fashion out of annealed wire. The total weight of the structure is about three hundred and fifty pounds, five hundred and nineteen different parts being used in its construction.



A Gravity Clock.

Mr. Eugene Walser, of Los Angeles, has perfected a clock which is operated by the gravity system, and does not contain a spring in any of its parts. The motive power for the clock is gained when it is run down an eight and one-third per cent. incline, which is one foot long. As it takes the cylindrical-shaped timepiece thirty days to roll down the inclined plane, all that is necessary to wind the clock is to set it again at the top of the little hill once a month. While the exterior of the clock revolves in its descent of the incline, the face always remains in a perpendicular position. The force which is fighting against gravity to hold the cylinder from rolling on down to the bottom of the grade is the secret of the timepiece's operation.



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BLUE BLOOD

by WILLIAM CAINE

ILLUSTRATED BY H·M BATEMAN

THEY were sitting round the fire in the Big Room of the Black and White Club. To them entered William Burslem. He said, "Take care. The Duchess is out with her gun again."

"She doesn't get me," said Miles.

"Nor me," said Luttrel Harrison.

"Nor me," said the others, until all but one had spoken.

"She'll get Mendoza," said Thomas Rayner.

"If we let her," said Miles.

"But," said Adkins Wallace, "we won't. Mendoza, you poor ignorant foreigner, you shall be saved."

"Thank you," said Mendoza. "Who will explain?"

"I will," said William Burslem, "because I not only introduced the subject, but I am the one person who can be trusted to speak about the lady in question for more than half a minute without saying something for which, if he was a gentleman, he would blush."

"That," said Mendoza, "is the preface. Now for the story."

"The subject of the few observations which I am about to make," said William Burslem, "is a very great lady, none other indeed than Her Splendour the Duchess of Exe, otherwise known among us poor artists as Old Mother Once. You will understand why when I have done.

"This Duchess is among the richest ladies of our land, while for benevolence she stands alone. I suppose there has never been a woman whose name has appeared in more lists of patronesses. She sits, nominally, upon committees without number. No *matinées* can very well be held without her approval. She opens bazaars as you might open oysters. That is the kind of lady she is.

"But her real greatness consists in this: She never gives money away. So far as her name and her presence and her labour will assist the Good Cause (whatever it may be), they are entirely at its service; but of her gold—not a copper. She is, however, so extremely well born that her name and her presence are alone worth a thousand pounds to any charity show. And I'll say this much for her: she doesn't extort her percentage on the earnings. She doesn't need to. Otherwise she would.

"I have just heard that she has undertaken to run a stall at the big Fancy Fair at the Albert Hall during the second week of April in aid of St. Vitus's Hospital. So unless you are very careful, Mendoza, you will presently find yourself being introduced to her. I can't, of course, say where. *She* will arrange that. She cannot fail to have discovered you, since all London is talking exclusively about you and your rotten caricatures. You are her meat, my poor Don. Your throat is stretched for her knife. Even now, I'll wager a sovereign, she is laying her plans for acquiring an original Mendoza to raffle in aid of St. Vitus's. She is a great believer in raffling. She always takes the object to be raffled round herself; and as she has a first-rate press-agent and her face is as well known to the public as the Britannia on a penny, she never has any difficulty in selling her tickets. In this way she can dispose for fifty pounds of a Turkey rug or a Nankin

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plate which might with luck fetch ten guineas over the counter.

"But all is not yet said.

"You are to know, Mendoza, that she is past-mistress in the noble art of sweedling pictures out of poor artists. Nothing is easier to raffle than a fine drawing with a well-known signature. People who might hesitate to put in for a motor-car or a typewriter or a prize Pekingese will readily risk their money for a thing that they can carry home under their arm and hang immediately in their drawing-room, thereby acquiring a reputation among their friends as a person of discriminating taste. So, when this Duchess has a bazaar on her hands, it is her custom to fix upon some painter of repute, make his acquaintance (if she doesn't already enjoy it), fill him up to the chin with flattery, ask him to lunch, and persuade him that he is going to become an intimate of the house. Then she invites herself to his studio and causes him to present her with a specimen of his work for her stall. Next time the poor devil encounters her—possibly at the bazaar itself—she, having no more present use for him, cuts him dead; for such are aristocrats. Next time she wants a picture out of him she asks him to lunch again—once per picture. Hence the name by which she is known among the painters. He goes to lunch—for we are all snobs—and again she invites herself to tea. Having got another picture out of him, she again forgets his face. After one or two experiences of the kind, most of us grow less snobbish, which is very good for us, and she has to find a new victim. There is always one ready for her. He may have heard about her; he may have sworn never to be diddled by the Duchess; but it is not true that in vain is the net spread in the sight of every bird. She diddles him infallibly, she is so highly born and she is so amiable. However, if *you* are diddled, Mendoza, it will be your own fault. You won't be able to say that you weren't put wise to the game."

"No," said Mendoza.

About a fortnight later Mendoza went to a lunch given at the Café Royal by Glorious James, the publisher who had brought out Mendoza's Album in the previous autumn. Glorious James had promised him that he should meet Paul Pierre Eclabouche, for whose stories Mendoza, at that time, lived from one issue to the next of the *Hors d'Œuvres Variés*. Eclabouche, however, did not turn up, and Mendoza was compensated for this disappointment with an introduction to the Duchess of Exe. He sat at her right hand.

He judged her weight to be in the neighbourhood of fifteen stone, and, after counting her chins carefully, he decided that they were four and not five in number. These chins melted insensibly into her bosom, and after her bosom she went straight down to the floor. Only above her hips was there any sign that she had ever possessed a waist. She wore (slightly askew) a superb transformation of bright yellow curls, and her complexion was that of a village maiden in the third row, for she was far too great a lady to trouble about verisimilitude. Her nose was exactly like Julius Cæsar's. Her eyes were as blue as her blood. Her eyelashes were heavily loaded with something black and adhesive. Her eyebrows had been laid on with a trowel. Her teeth, however, were all her own, and paid for this ten years. Her voice was loud and hard, and her hat was the last word and later than that. Beneath her ears and across her second chin were disposed, on a steel wire, pearls to the value of forty thousand pounds. This was all her jewellery, with the exception of her diamond, ruby, sapphire, fire-opal, black-opal, white-opal, harlequin-opal, and turquoise rings, half-a-dozen bracelets, ear-pendants, and a brooch or two. She looked at Mendoza through a long-handled lorgnette of tortoise-shell and told him that she had been positively aching to meet him. His caricatures, she said, were the most marvellous things that had ever happened.

Mendoza gloated upon her as gloats the gourmet upon a bottle of historic claret. He gave her amiability for amiability. They got on like one o'clock. Before they parted she asked him to lunch on the morrow at Exe House. He accepted with a rapture which he did not try to conceal.

Before he left Exe House she invited herself to tea, next day, at his studio. Mendoza accepted this invitation with an eagerness which no one could have failed to remark, and with an interior joy which he did not think it necessary to communicate.

Next day, accordingly, the Duchess arrived, in a two-thousand-guinea motor-car, at the tall old house in Chelsea where Mendoza, at this period, dwelt, and proceeded to hoist herself up the dark and narrow staircase which led into the roof where Mendoza maintained his unassuming existence. It took her ten minutes to get there, but she did it at last. There was a free picture waiting for her at the end of her journey.

The moment she had filled herself with tea and cakes she asked Mendoza to show her some of his wonderful drawings. She was not there to waste her time.

Mendoza produced a portfolio and exhibited sketches in black and white. When she had decided which of the drawings would raffle best, she laid hands on it and, turning to Mendoza with a smile of extraordinary

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horror, said, in a voice of appalling charm: "This, Señor Mendoza, is the picture you are going to let me carry away for my St. Vitus's Bazaar next month—isn't it? Aren't you?"

"No, indeed," said Mendoza. "That's not at all the kind of drawing I should like you to have. If you really want a piece of my work for a bazaar, let me draw you something worth while, something with colour. I shall be only too proud."

"Oh!" she cried. "I don't like to do that. I just thought that if you *could* spare me one of these corking little things—to raffle, you know—but of course, if you *will* be so awfully sweet and generous and splendid as to make me a drawing *specially*—why, I don't know *how* to tell you *how* very, *very* grateful I shall be."

"Don't mention it," said Mendoza. "But you must promise to raffle it yourself."

"Oh, of course I will," she cried. "I promise you that. I'll swear it on anything you please. Why, I couldn't dream of letting anyone else even lay her *claws* on it. And now"—she rose—"I really must pop off. Thank you so tremendously much for your delightful tea. As for your wonderful promise, I simply can't tell you what I feel. It's made a new woman of me, by Jove!"

Mendoza took his drawing out of her hands, which had forgotten to put it back in the portfolio. "You can depend on me," he said. "Absolutely." And he accompanied her down to her car.

This was the picture he sent to her.

In a superbly furnished dining-room, surrounded by seven stunning flunkeys, the Duchess of Exe, most venomously caricatured, sat at meat. The table groaned with food of, obviously, the costliest description. Gold plate was everywhere. Hot-house flowers were everywhere else. The Duchess was digging her spoon into a huge terrine marked "Foie gras." A dreadful lapdog lay on a blue satin cushion. Before it, on an eighteen-carat plate, was a small roasted bird and one of the flunkeys was helping it solicitously to salt. In the lower right-hand corner of the picture stood a large waste-paper basket, ornamented with pieces of paper marked, "Appeal from Hospital," "Request from Missionary Society," "Prayer from Orphanage," and so on. Underneath was the title: "The Duchess of X Begins Charity at Home."

It cost Mendoza three days' hard work to produce this fearful thing. Naturally, he said nothing about it to anyone. He had rebuked a pernicious old cat, but he was not inclined to boast about it. The thing lay between himself and the Duchess; and there it might lie. But, perhaps, she would not, for the future, be quite so active in the exercise of her past-mistress-ship of the noble art of sweedling.

He resolved, however, to give himself the satisfaction of standing for a few moments before her stall at the St. Vitus's Bazaar and encountering her frozen eye.

Almost the first person he saw when he entered the Albert Hall was the Duchess of Exe. She was accompanied by a young man in whom he recognized the heir to an earldom. Propped against his chest, this youth carried Mendoza's picture, which had been framed very becomingly in black with a grey mount. The Duchess carried a gold-and-diamond fountain-pen and a book of raffle-tickets and counterfoils. As Mendoza came upon her she was addressing two fluttering ladies who looked as if they lived in Surbiton and lived there in luxury.

"Don't you want," she was shouting at them, "to buy a ticket for this corking caricature of me by Mendoza? I'm the Duchess of Exe, you know. I don't need to tell you that Mendoza's the greatest caricaturist that ever lived. This picture's worth every penny of a hundred guineas. The tickets are only ten bob a time. If you'll take my advice you'll put in for half-a-dozen, each of you. Charlie, hold it so that these ladies can see it properly. Hasn't he ticked me off corkingly? My nephew here, Lord Wye, says it's the best likeness of me he's ever seen. Don't you, Charlie? Just look at the way he's done my wig, all to one side—just how the damned thing always is, isn't it, Charlie? And look how I'm gouging out that *pâté de foie gras*. I don't believe I really look as awful as that, but Lord Wye swears I look worse, when it's *pâté de foie gras*. Well, how many tickets can I sell you? Twenty? Good! And you? Twenty also? Splendid! What are your names and addresses? That'll be ten quid a piece. Thanks. Come on, Charlie."

She turned, and there was Mendoza within a foot of her.

She addressed him without a second of hesitation.

"Don't you want," she shouted, "to buy a ticket for this picture? It's a caricature by Mendoza of me. I'm the Duchess of Exe. Mendoza's the biggest thing in caricaturists that's ever happened, I understand. This drawing's worth a thousand guineas, if it's worth sixpence; and you can have a ticket for ten bob. It's the chance of a lifetime. My nephew here, Lord Wye, swears it's far more like me than life; don't you, Charlie? Just look at all the gold plate on the table and the lapdog with its partridge. And look at the greedy way my eyes gleam and see how he's got my false teeth. I'll take my Alfred David I look like an ogre. Well, how many tickets can I sell you? I advise

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"THE DUCHESS OF X BEGINS CHARITY AT HOME."

you to have more than one—half-a-dozen at least—for it's really a wonderful chance we're giving you to get a genuine Mendoza cheap. In another ten years they'll be giving thousands for a thing like this at Christie's. Come now, how many are we to say? Don't keep me waiting all day."

"I'll take fifty," said Mendoza. His admiration for this woman verged on adoration.

"Splendid!" she said. "What name and address? Mendoza? Yes? 14, Billiter Street, Chelsea. Good! That'll be twenty-five pounds. Here's a cheque form, if it's any use to you. I say, Charlie, hold that picture for the gentleman to write his cheque on. Thanks. Come on, Charlie."

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PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.

495.—THE ASYLUM GAMBIT.

THIS is a curious position on the chessboard that I constructed some few weeks ago at a chess club, to illustrate something under discussion. It caused so much perplexity to some of the members that I present it for the consideration of my readers. The diagram shows the position after Black's 15th move in a match game between Hanwell and Colney Hatch. What was that move? If you think you have discovered which piece Black last moved, you will find it interesting to try to construct a possible game of chess leading to the position in fifteen moves.

BLACK—12 PIECES.



WHITE—12 PIECES.

What was Black's last move?

496.—SPENDING HIS TENPENCE.

THERE is a legend that, just before the war, a poor Egyptian fellah had tenpence which he wished to lay out in meat. The butcher had three qualities: fourpence a pound, twopence a pound, and a farthing a pound. Spending all his money, the man bought ten pounds of meat, securing some of each quality. As he purchased as much as was possible of the best quality, how much did he buy of each? Of course, the quantity in each case must be such as the butcher could weigh correctly with an ordinary set of weights. A butcher never weighs fractions of an ounce.

497.—A RAIL PROBLEM.

A CAIRO correspondent says: "The railings round our gardens are often of fanciful design. There is one like this" (see illustration). "You will notice that in each division between two uprights there is an equal number of the ornamental rails and that a rail is divided in halves and a portion stuck on each side of every upright, except that the uprights at the ends have not been given half-rails. One day I found myself idly counting the rails from one end to the other. There were 1,223 rails, counting two halves as one rail. I then noticed that the number of those divisions was five more than twice the number of whole rails in a division. Can you say how many rails there were in each division?" I do not think it will give many of my readers much difficulty, but it will be found interesting to figure out the answer.



498.—THE KING-MAKER.

THE following puzzle, constructed by P. R. M. on the lines of my "Expanding Words" (No. 461), will, I know, be found interesting. The first space is filled by one letter, the next by two letters, the next by three letters, and so on, as indicated by the dots, adding a new letter every time and readjusting at will, like a, at, tea, team, meats, etc.

At politics . used to try my hand;
.. I loved to place kings on the throne,
Risking the ... of crowned heads I displaced.
A great game this—to pull the .... alone,
Whilst others sat ....., to feel th' .....
Responsibility devolved on me
To choose the ..... for the kingship stakes.
I was a power in the land, you see!
But now I'm getting old, my ..... wanes.
I think I'll ..... the rightful heir,
Hoping there will arise no .....
Imbroglios—of such we've had our share!
Then, ... to my lawful king
My most complete devotion, I'll essay
To settle down in peace. If that can't be,
I'll rob the treasury and run away!

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.

490.—FOLDING POSTAGE-STAMPS.

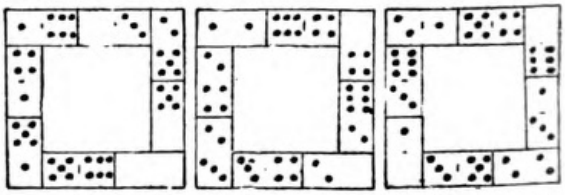
NUMBERING the stamps as in the diagram last month—that is, 1 2 3 4 in the first row and 5 6 7 8 in the second row, to get the order 1 5 6 4 8 7 3 2, with No. 1, face upwards, only visible, hold this way, with all faces downward: 5 6 7 8. Fold 7 over 6. Lay 4 1 2 3 4, flat on 8 and tuck them both in between 7 and 6, so that these four are in the order, 7 8 4 6. Now bring 5 and 1 under 6, and it is done. The order 1 3 7 5 6 8 4 2 is more difficult and might well have been overlooked if one had not been convinced that, according to law, it must be possible. First fold so that 5 6 7 8 only are visible, with their faces uppermost. Then fold 5 on 6. Now, between 1 and 5 you have to tuck in 7 and 8 so that 7 lies on top of 5 and 8 bends round under 6. Then the order will be as required.

491.—A LITTLE TRAIN PUZZLE.

THERE is no necessity for any algebraical working in the solution of this problem, nor need we know the distance between the two cities. Wherever they met, just send the two trains back for an hour's journey at their respective rates. One will obviously go 60 miles and the other 40 miles. So they were 100 miles (60 added to 40) apart an hour before they met!

492.—DOMINO FRAMES.

THE three diagrams show a solution. The sum of all the pips is 132. One-third of this is 44. First divide the dominoes into any three groups of 44 pips



each. Then, if we decide to try 12 for the sum of the sides, 4 times 12 being 4 more than 44, we must arrange in every case that the four corners in a frame shall sum to 4. The rest is done by trial and exchanges from one group to another of dominoes containing an equal number of pips.

493.—SNUFFING DOING.

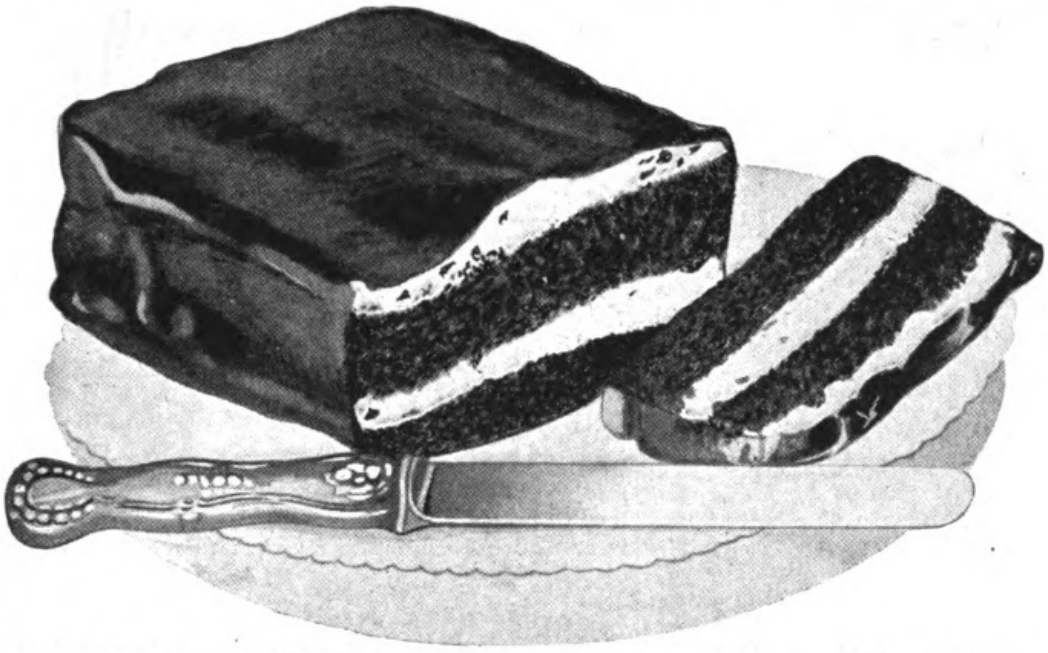
As the title implies, this is still unsolved.

494.—MISSING WORDS.

THE words, in their order, are, DRAWER, WARRED, REWARD, REDRAW, WARDER, RED WAR.

By a printer's error the answer to the Charade in "Simon in Puzzleland" in our December issue was omitted in the January number. The word is MET-A-PHY-SI-CIAN.

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CHOCOLATE CAKE RECIPE.—Beat yolks of 2 eggs with 1 cup of Libby's Evaporated Milk until foamy. Add ¼ teaspoon salt, ¾ cup sugar, and 1 teaspoon vanilla, mixing thoroughly. Then beat in 1 cup of flour. Next add 2 ounces melted chocolate with ½ cup of flour sifted with 3 teaspoons baking powder. Lastly fold in the beaten whites of the 2 eggs and bake in a quick oven in two layers. Boil 1 cup of sugar with ⅓ cup water until it threads. Pour on stiffly beaten whites of 2 eggs and beat with a fork until it holds its shape. Add 1 teaspoon vanilla. Spread on each layer. Top with chocolate icing made of 1 cup icing sugar, ½ teaspoon vanilla, ¼ cup Libby's Evaporated Milk and 2 tablespoons of melted chocolate—all beaten together until thick and smooth.

Milk that takes the place of butter in your cakes

SO thick and creamy is Libby's Milk that its richness actually takes the place of butter in cakes, cream sauces and many other recipes!

Think what an economy this means for you! And what a saving in time, for no longer need you spend a tiresome ten minutes or so "creaming" the butter for your cake. Libby's Unsweetened Evaporated Milk mixes beautifully with the other ingredients, and you will be amazed to see how light and tender a cake it makes.

In Libby's Sterilized, Unsweetened, Evaporated Milk, you have the full rich "whole" yield from the finest herds of world famous dairy regions. It comes to you fresh and pure because it undergoes complete sterilization and is kept in hermetically sealed tins. Order a tin of this rich milk from your grocer to-day, and try Libby's recipe for the delicious chocolate layer cake. A limited edition of our recipe booklet has just been printed. Send in your name and address to our London Office and we will be pleased to send you a complimentary copy.

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To face end of Text.

THE ROSE IN THE WILDERNESS.

"MRS. DESPARD," announced the maid. For the minute the name was unfamiliar; then, as a very perfectly-tailored girl came into the room, I laughed.

"Why, Ruth, I was just wondering who the stranger was. I always forget my friends' married names. Tea, Marie, and hot buttered toast. Sit down, Ruth; you've happened in on coal and butter day. Well, how goes it?"

The firelight flickered on a pretty face that was momentarily hardened in a rather worried look.

"Fairly well," she said, as she loosened her furs. "Fact is, I've come to say good-bye. I've had a cable from David, and he wants me to go out to Australia to him on the next boat. Of course I'll love to see him again, but it's all rather uprooting, isn't it? I've never lived on a ranch in my life, and I think I shall be rather homesick at first."

I sympathized, and we talked for some time. Then she said: "You know, I'm rather worried about the frivolous problem of keeping my looks. David told me that what first attracted him was the fact that I looked so different from most Australian women. But under Australian conditions, shall I be able to keep it up? For example, I have my hair washed and waved at a hairdresser's every fortnight: that will be impossible in my new life. And I look hideous with straight hair."

"Why, that's easily solved: take out a good supply of silmerine with you; once out there you can order it from Sydney, which will be your nearest town. You only want to damp your hair with it slightly and put in slides or a curler or two, which can easily be concealed under a boudoir cap. Get your hair accustomed to silmerine treatment on the voyage out; then, by the time you land, it will probably have developed a distinct natural tendency to curl and will only occasionally need damping. Of course it is much better for the hair than to sap all its gloss and vitality with hot irons. For a home shampoo, I think you cannot beat stallax; a teaspoonful of stallax granules to a cup of hot water will make the most delicious foaming lather, which cleanses the hair splendidly. You'll be able to dry it in the sun in no time in that gorgeous climate! If I were you, I should always keep some reliable tonic in the house, for you never know when your hair may require a little stimulating. Yes, boranium and bay rum is excellent; I always use it. I should take some boranium out with you. You can get it in very convenient little packages."

"Well, you've cheered me up a lot," said Ruth; "but one awful problem is worrying me."

"Let's hear it," I answered.

"Do you know that I am one of those unfortunate persons who suffer from superfluous hair? If I were not continually undergoing electric treatment I should be that horror, a woman with a moustache! What *can* I do in Australia, miles from civilization?"

"Nothing is easier," I told her, "than to get rid of superfluous hair. Electrolysis, as I daresay you have found, is expensive and painful, and does not permanently destroy the hair. You should never be without some pure powdered pheminol; it is obtainable in very nice little one-ounce bottles; an ounce should last a considerable time, and of course the powder form makes it ideal for travelling. To remove superfluous hair, you should mix a small quantity of the pheminol with an equal quantity of water into a stiff paste, rub it on the affected part, and after a couple of minutes the hair shrivels up and disappears entirely."

"Why, that seems too good to be true!" exclaimed Ruth. "I must write that down. Now, Estelle, I'm going to worry you some more. What kind of complexion cream should I take? I want something that lasts, that doesn't take up much room, and, above all, that really does keep one's skin in condition."

"The answer to the riddle is mercolized wax," I replied. "A couple of ounces such as chemists usually sell lasts for three or four months; it is solid, compact, and not wasteful to use, and it's the finest complexion beautifier there is. Its great merit is that, instead of making the skin dull by clogging the pores with grease, as too many 'face-creams' do, it gently absorbs the dull outer tissue which gets coarsened by hard water, dirt, and so on—and reveals the dazzling freshness of the new skin below. Of course, in a hot climate where the sun and dust tend to ruin even the prettiest skins, it will be simply invaluable. I'll give you another useful tip: be sure to provide yourself with some tablets of stymol: then, if you happen to have a blackhead, you have only to melt one tablet in a little warm water, bathe the blackhead, and you will be able to remove it, without the slightest difficulty, with a clean towel."

"Thanks so much. Of course, I shan't need powder, because, since I discovered cleminite, I haven't needed it."

"No, you couldn't do better than carry on with cleminite," I assured her. "I can't think why more women don't give up the old-fashioned messy powder and use that nice lotion instead. Well, Ruth, I think you'll blossom in the desert all right, if you are wise and take care of your looks."

"I hope I'll be able to," she said. "I'm afraid my hands will get awfully red with scrubbing and so on," she laughed, ruefully, "but still, it's not a big price for so much."

"You needn't suffer that much," I said, "if you use bicrolium jelly to get the dirt out of the cracks and take away the rough, red look. When you have massaged them well, dust lightly with a little talc powder, and your hands will stay as pretty and white as they are now."

"I must go," she said, rising. . . . "Will you come and see me off? I sail on Friday fortnight. . . . Good-bye."

"Good-bye, Ruth, and the very best of luck to you both. . . . Write to me, won't you? . . . Good-bye."

PARKER BELMONT'S CLYNOL BERRIES FOR OBESITY.—[ADVT.]

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THE MAN IN RATCATCHER

by

"SAPPER"
(H. CYRIL McNEILE)

ILLUSTRATED BY
LIONEL EDWARDS
ARCA

I.

"'AIN'T much ter look at, Major, but 'e's a 'andy little 'orse."

A groom, chewing the inevitable straw, gave a final polish to the saddle, and then stood at the animal's head, waiting for the tall, spare man with the bronzed, weather-beaten face, who was slowly drawing on his gloves in the yard, to mount. Idly the groom wondered if the would-be sportsman knew which side of a horse it was customary to get into the saddle from; in fact one Nimrod recently—a gentleman clothed in spotless pink—had so far excelled himself as to come to rest facing his horse's tail. But what could you expect these times, reflected the groom, when most of the men who could ride in days gone by, would ride no more: and a crowd of galloping tinkers, with rank cigars and ranker manners, had taken their places? When he thought of the men who came now—and the women, too—to Boddington's Livery Stable, renowned for fifty years and with a reputation second to none, and contrasted them with their predecessors, he was wont to spit, mentally and literally. And the quods—Strewth! It was a fair disgrace to turn out such 'orses from Boddington's. Only the crowd wot rode 'em didn't know no better: the 'orses was quite good enough—aye! too good—for the likes o' them.

"'Let out that throat-lash a couple of holes."

The groom looked at the speaker dazedly for a moment; a bloke that knew the name of a single bit of saddlery on a horse's back was a rare customer these days.

"And take that ironmonger's shop out of the poor brute's mouth. I'll ride him on a snaffle."

"'E pulls a bit when 'e's fresh, Major," said the groom, dubiously.

The tall, spare man laughed. "I think I'll risk it," he answered. "Where did you pick him up—at a jumble sale?"

"'E ain't much ter look at, I knows, Major," said the groom, carrying out his instructions. "But if yer 'andle 'im easy, and nurse 'im a bit, 'e'll give yer some sport."

"I can quite believe it," remarked the other, swinging into the saddle. "Ring the bell, will you? That will give him his cue to start."

With a grin on his face the groom watched the melancholy steed amble sedately out of the yard and down the road.

Before he had gone fifty yards the horse's head had come up a little, he was walking more collectedly—looking as if he had regained some of the spring of former days. For there was a *man* on his back—a man born and bred to horses and their ways—and it would be hard to say which of the two, the groom or the animal, realized it first. Which was why the grin so quickly effaced itself. The groom's old pride in Boddington's felt outraged at having to offer such a mount to such a man. He turned as a two-seated racing car pulled up in the yard, and a young man stepped out. He nodded to the groom as he removed his coat, and the latter touched his cap.

"Grand day, Mr. Dawson," he remarked. "Scent should be good."

The newcomer grunted indifferently, and adjusted his already faultless stock, while another groom led out a magnificent blood chestnut from a loose-box.

"Who was the fellah in ratcatcher I

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passed, ridin' that awful old quod of yours ? " he asked.

To such a sartorial exquisite a bowler hat and a short coat was almost a crime.

" I dunno, sir," said the groom. " Ain't never seen 'im before to the best of me knowledge. But you'll see 'im at the finish."

The other regarded his chestnut complacently.

" He won't live half a mile if we get goin'," he remarked. " You want a horse if hounds find in Spinner's Copse : not a prehistoric bone-bag." He glanced at the old groom's expressionless face, and gave a short laugh in which there was more than a hint of self-satisfaction. " And you can't get a horse without money these days, George, and dam' big money at that." He carefully adjusted his pink coat as he sat in the saddle. " Have the grey taken to Merton cross-roads : and you can take the car there, too," he continued, turning to the chauffeur.

Then with a final hitch at his coat, he too went out of the yard. For a while the old groom watched him dispassionately, until a bend in the road hid him from sight. Then he turned to one of his underlings and delivered himself of one of his usual cryptic utterances.

" 'Ave yer ever seen a monkey, Joe, sittin' on the branch of a tree, 'uggin' a waxwork doll ? "

" Can't say as 'ow I 'ave, Garge," returned the other, after profound cogitation.

" Well, yer don't need to. That monkey'd be the same shape 'as 'im on a 'orse."

II.

THE meet of the South Leicesters at Spinner's Copse generally produced a field even larger than the normal huge crowd which followed that well-known pack. It was near the centre of their country, and if Fate was kind, and the fox took the direction of Hangman's Bottom, the line was unsurpassed in any country in the world.

It was a quarter to eleven when the tall, spare man, having walked the three-quarters of a mile from Boddington's, dismounted by the side of the road, and thoughtfully lit a cigarette. His eyes took in every detail of the old familiar scene : and, in spite of himself, his mind went back to the last time he had been there. He smiled a little bitterly: he had been a fool to come, and open old wounds. This game wasn't for him any more : his hunting days were over. If things had been different : if only—— He drew back as a blood chestnut, fretting and irritable under a pair of heavy hands, came dancing by, spattering mud in all directions. If only—well ! he might have been riding that chestnut instead of the heated clothes-peg on his back now. He looked with a kind of weary cynicism at his own mount, mournfully nibbling grass : then he laid a kindly hand on the animal's neck.

" 'Tain't your fault, old son, is it ? " he muttered. " But to think of Spinner's Copse —and you. Oh ! ye gods ! "

" Hounds, gentlemen, please." The man looked up quickly with a sudden gleam in his eyes as hounds came slowly past. A new second whip they'd got ; he remembered now, Wilson had been killed at Givenchy. But the huntsman, Ferrers, was the same—a little greyer perhaps—but still the same shrewd, kindly sportsman. He caught his eye at that moment, and looked away quickly. He felt certain no one would recognize him, but he wanted to run no risks. There weren't likely to be many of the old crowd out to-day, and he'd altered almost beyond recognition—but it was as well to be on the safe side. And Ferrers, he remembered of old, had an eye like a hawk.

He pretended to fumble with his girths, turning his back on the huntsman. It was perhaps as well that he did so for his own peace of mind ; for Joe Ferrers, with his jaw slowly opening, was staring fascinated at the stooping figure. He was dreaming, of course ; it couldn't be him—not possibly. The man whom this stranger was like was dead—killed on the Somme. Entirely imagination. But still the huntsman stared, until a sudden raising of hats all round announced the arrival of the Master.

It was the moment that the tall, quiet man, standing a little aloof on the outskirts of the crowd, had been dreading. He had told himself frequently that he had forgotten the girl who stepped out of the car with her father ; he had told himself even more frequently that she had long since forgotten him. But now, as he saw once more the girl's glowing face and her slender, upright figure, showed off to perfection by her habit, he stifled a groan, and cursed himself more bitterly than ever for having been such a fool as to come. If only—once again those two bitter words mocked him. He had not forgotten ; he never would forget ; and it was not the least part of the price he had to pay for the criminal negligence of his late father.

He glanced covertly at the girl ; she was talking vivaciously to the man whom he had designated as a heated clothes-peg. He noticed the youth bending towards her with an air of possession which infuriated him ; then he laughed and swung himself into the saddle. What had it got to do with him ?

Then on a sudden impulse he turned to a farmer next him.

" Who is that youngster talking to the Master's daughter ? " he asked.

The farmer looked at him in mild surprise.

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"THE HUNTSMAN WAS STARING FASCINATED AT THE STOOPING FIGURE. HE WAS DREAMING, OF COURSE. THE MAN WHOM THIS STRANGER WAS LIKE WAS DEAD—KILLED ON THE SOMME."

'You'm a stranger to these parts, mister, evidently," he said. "That be young Mr. Dawson; and folks do say he be engaged to Miss Gollanfield."

Engaged! To that young blighter! With hands like pot-hooks, and a seat like an elephant! And then, quite suddenly, he produced his handkerchief, and proceeded

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most unnecessarily to blow his nose. For Ferrers was talking excitedly to Sir Hubert Gollanfield and Major Dawlish, the hunt secretary; and the eyes of all three men were fixed on him.

"I thought it was before, sir, and then I saw him mount, and I know," said Ferrers, positively.

"It can't be. He was killed in France," answered the Master. "Wasn't he, David?"

"I've always heard so," said Dawlish. "I'll go and cap him now and have a closer look."

"Anyway, Joe, not a word at present." The Master turned to Ferrers. "We'd better draw the spinney first."

Through the crowd, as it slowly moved off, the secretary threaded his way towards the vaguely familiar figure ahead. It couldn't be; it was out of the question. And yet, as he watched him, more and more did he begin to believe that the huntsman was right. Little movements; an odd, indefinable hitch of the shoulders; the set of the stranger's head. And then, with almost a catch in his breath, he saw that the man he was following had left the crowd, and was unostentatiously edging for a certain gap, which to the uninitiated appeared almost a *cul-de-sac*. Of course, it might be just chance; on the other hand, that gap was the closely-guarded preserve—as far as such things may be guarded—of the chosen few who really rode; the first-flighters—the men who took their own line, and wanted that invaluable hundred yards' start to get them clear of the mob.

Slightly quickening his pace, the secretary followed his quarry. He overtook him just as he had joined the bare dozen, who, with hats rammed down, sat waiting for the first whimper. They were regarding the newcomer with a certain curiosity as the secretary came up; almost with that faint hostility which is an Englishman's special prerogative on the entrance of a second person to his otherwise empty railway carriage. Who was this fellow in ratcatcher mounted on a hopeless screw? And what the devil was he doing here, anyway?

"Mornin', David." A chorus of greeting hailed the advent of the popular secretary, but, save for a brief nod and smile, he took no notice. His eyes were fixed on the stranger, who was carefully adjusting one of his leathers.

"Excuse me, sir." Major Dawlish walked his horse up to him, and then sat staring and motionless. "My God, it can't be——" He spoke under his breath, and the stranger apparently failed to hear.

"What is the cap?" he asked, courteously. "A fiver this season, I believe."

"Danny!" The secretary was visibly agitated. "You're Danny Drayton! And we thought you were dead!"

"I fear, sir, that there is some mistake," returned the other. "My name is John Marston."

In silence the two men looked at one another, and then Major Dawlish bowed.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Marston," he said, gravely. "But you bear a strange resemblance to a certain very dear friend of mine, whom we all believed had been killed at Flers in 1916. He combined two outstanding qualities," continued the secretary, deliberately, "did that friend of mine: quixotic chivalry to the point of idiocy, and the most wonderful horsemanship."

Once more the eyes of the two men met, and then John Marston looked away, staring over the wonderful bit of country lying below them.

"I am sorry," he remarked, quietly, "that you should have lost your friend."

"Ah, but have I, Mr. Marston; have I?" interrupted David Dawlish quickly.

"You tell me he died at Flers," returned the other. "And very few mistakes were made in such matters, which have not been rectified since."

"He disappeared a year or two before the war," said the secretary, "suddenly—without leaving a trace. We heard he had gone to New Zealand; but we could get no confirmation. Do you ever go to the Grand National, Mr. Marston?" he continued, with apparent irrelevance.

The stranger stiffened in his saddle. "I have been," he answered, abruptly. Merciful heavens! wouldn't some hound own to scent soon?

"Do you remember that year when a certain gentleman rider was booed on the course?" went on the secretary, reminiscently. "It was the year John Drayton and Son went smash for half a million: and it was the son who was booed."

"I don't wonder," returned the stranger. "He was a fool to ride."

"Was he, Mr. Marston? Was he? Or was it just part of that quixotic chivalry of which I have spoken? The horse was a rogue: there was no one else who could do him justice: so, rather than disappoint his friend, the owner, the son turned out."

"And very rightly got hissed for his pains," said John Marston, grimly. "I remember the smash well—Drayton's smash. It ruined thousands of poor people: and only a legal quibble saved a criminal prosecution."

"True," assented the secretary. "But it was old Drayton's fault. We all knew it at the time. Danny Drayton—the son——"

"The man who died at Flers," interrupted

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John Marston, and the secretary looked at him quietly.

"Perhaps: perhaps not. Mistakes *have* occurred. But whether he died or whether he didn't—the son was incapable of even a mean thought. He was not to blame."

"I must beg to differ, sir," returned John Marston. "The firm was Drayton *and Son:* the Son was responsible as much as the father. If one member of a firm goes wrong, the other members must make good. It is only fair to the public."

"I see," answered the secretary. "Then I wonder who the other member of the firm can have been? The father died soon after the exposure: the son died at Flers." He looked John Marston straight in the face.

"That would seem to account for the firm," returned the other, indifferently.

"Except for one thing," said the secretary, "the significance of which—strangely enough—has only just struck me. There's a certain old farmer in this district, who invested one hundred pounds with Drayton—all his savings. Along with the rest, it went smash. A month or two ago he received one hundred and thirty-five pounds in notes, from an unknown source. Seven years' interest at five per cent. is thirty-five pounds." And suddenly the secretary, usually one of the most unemotional of men, leaned forward in his saddle, and his voice was a little husky. "Danny! You damned quixotic fool! Come back to us: we can't afford to lose a man who can go like you."

The man in ratcatcher stared fixedly in front of him—his profile set and rigid. For a moment the temptation was well-nigh overwhelming: every account squared up—every loss made good. Then, ringing in his ears, he heard once more the yells and cat-calls as he had cantered past the stand at Aintree.

"As I said to you before, sir," he said, facing the secretary steadily: "My name is John Marston. You are making a mistake."

What Major Dawlish's reply would have been will never be known. He seemed on the point of an explosion of wrath, when clear and shrill through the morning air came Joe Ferrers' "gone away." The pack came tumbling out of covert, and everything else was forgotten.

"It's the right line," cried John Marston, excitedly. "Hangman's Bottom, for a quid."

The field streamed off, everyone according to their own peculiar methods bent on getting the best they could out of a breast-high scent. The macadam brigade left early, and set grimly about their dangerous task. The man whose horse always picked up a stone early if the run was likely to be a hot one, and arrived cursing his luck, late but quite safe, duly dismounted and fumbled with his outraged steed's perfectly sound hoof. The main body of the field streamed along in a crowd—that big section which is the backbone of every hunt, which contains every variety of individual, and in which every idiosyncrasy of character may be observed by the man who has eyes to see. And then in front of all, riding their own line—but not, as the uninitiated might imagine, deliberately selecting the most impossible parts of every jump, merely for the sport of the thing—the select few.

They had gone two miles without the suspicion of a check, before the secretary found himself near Sir Hubert. Both in their day had belonged to that select few, but now they were content to take things a little easier.

"It's Danny, Hubert," said the secretary, as they galloped side by side over a pasture field towards a stiff-looking post and rails. "Calling himself John Marston."

The Master grunted—glancing for a moment under his bushy eyebrows at the man, two or three hundred yards in front, who, despite his mount, still lived with the vanguard.

"Of course it is," he snorted. "There's no one else would be where he is, on a horse like that, with hounds running at this rate."

They steadied their pace as they came to the timber, and neither spoke again till they were halfway across the next field.

"What's his game, David? Confound you, sir," his voice rose to a bellow, as he turned in his saddle and glared at an impetuous youth behind, "will you kindly not ride in my pocket? Infernal young puppy! What's his game, David?"

"Quixotic tommy-rot," snorted the other. "He knows I know he's Danny: but he won't admit it."

"Has Molly seen him yet?" Sir Hubert glanced away to the left, where his daughter, on a raking black, had apparently got her hands full.

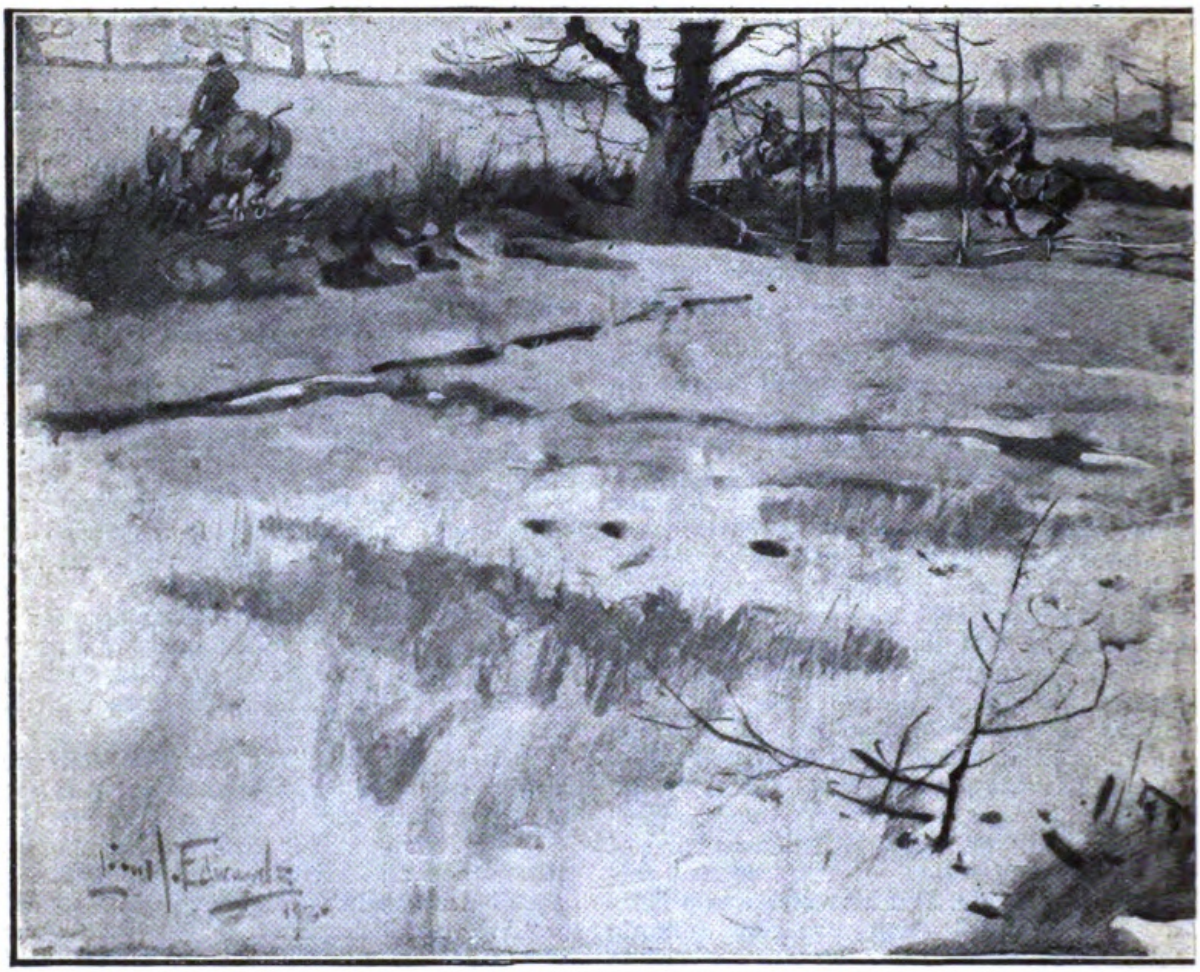
"I don't know."

The secretary, frowning slightly, followed the direction of the other's gaze. David Dawlish was no lover of young Dawson. He watched the girl for a moment, noting the proximity of the blood chestnut close to her: then he turned back to his old friend. "That black is too much for Molly, Hubert," he said, a trifle uneasily. "He'll get away with her some day."

"You tell her so, and see what happens, old man," chuckled Sir Hubert. "I tried once." Then he reverted to the old subject. "What are we going to do about it, David, if it is Danny?"

"There's nothing we can do," answered the other. "Officially, he's dead; the War Office have said so. If he chooses to remain John Marston, we can't stop him."

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"THEY FLEW THE BROOK SIMULTANEOUSLY, AND SWEPT ON UP THE OTHER SIDE OF THE A TREAT TO

And so for the time the matter was left; the hunting-field, when the going is hot enough for the veriest glutton, is no place for idle speculation and talk. There is time enough for that afterwards; while hounds are running it behoves a man to attend to the business in hand.

The pace by this time was beginning to tell. The main body of the hunt now stretched over half-a-dozen fields; even the first flight section was getting thinned out. And it was as David Dawlish topped the slight rise which hid the brook at the bottom of the valley beyond—the notorious Cedar Brook—that he found himself next to Molly Gollanfield.

Streaming up the other side were hounds, with Joe Ferrers safely over the water and fifty yards behind them. Two or three others were level with him, riding wide to his flank, but the secretary's eyes were fixed on a man in ratcatcher who was just ramming an obviously tiring horse at the brook. With a faint grin, he noted the place he had selected to jump; the spot, well-known to everyone familiar with the country as being the best and firmest take-off. He watched the horse rise—just fail to clear—stumble and peck badly; he saw the rider literally lift it on to its legs again, and sail on with barely a perceptible pause. And then he glanced at Molly Gollanfield.

"Well ridden; well ridden!" The girl's impulsive praise at a consummate piece of horsemanship made him smile a little grimly. What would she say when she knew the identity of the horseman? And what would he say?

They flew the brook simultaneously, young Dawson a few yards behind, and swept on up the other side of the valley.

"Who is that man in front, Uncle David?" called out the girl. "It's a treat to watch him ride."

"His name, so he tells me, is John Marston," said the secretary, quietly.

"Has he ever been out with us before?"

They breasted the hill as she spoke, to find that the point had ended, as such a run should end—but rarely does—with a kill in the open. The survivors of the front brigade had already dismounted as they came up, and for a few moments no one could think or speak of anything but the

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VALLEY. 'WHO IS THAT MAN IN FRONT, UNCLE DAVID?' CALLED OUT THE GIRL. 'IT'S WATCH HIM RIDE.'"

run. And it was a Captain Malvin, in one of the Lancer regiments, who recalled the mysterious stranger to the girl's mind.

"Who is that fellow in ratcatcher, Major?" Malvin was standing by her as he spoke, and the girl glanced round to find the subject of his interest.

He had dismounted twenty or thirty yards away, and was making much of his horse, which was completely cooked.

"Saw him in Boddington's," remarked young Dawson. "How the devil did he manage to get here on that?"

"By a process known as riding," said Malvin, briefly. "If you mounted that man on a mule, he'd still be at the top of a hunt—eh, Miss Gollanfield?"

But Molly Gollanfield was staring fascinated at the stranger. "Who did you say it was, Uncle David?" Her voice was low and tense, and Malvin glanced at her in surprise.

"John Marston," returned the secretary, slowly, "is the name he gave me."

And at that moment the man in ratcatcher looked at the girl.

"John Marston," she faltered. "Why—why—it's Danny! Danny, I thought you were dead!"

She walked her horse towards him and held out her hand, while a wonderful light dawned in her eyes.

"Danny!" she cried, "don't you remember me?"

And gradually the look of joy faded from her face, to be replaced by one of blank amazement. For the man was looking at her as if she had been a stranger.

Then, with a courteous bow, he removed his hat. "You are the second person, madam, who has made the same mistake this morning. My name is John Marston."

But the girl only stared at him in silence, and shook her head.

"I've been watching you ride, Danny," she said, at length, "and just think of it—I didn't know you. What a blind little fool I was, wasn't I?"

"I don't see how you could be expected to recognize me, madam," answered the man. "I hope you'll have as good a second run as the one we've just had. I'm afraid this poor old nag must go stablewards."

He looped the reins over his mare, and

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once more raised his hat as he turned away.

"But, Danny," cried the girl, a little wildly, "you can't go like this."

"Steady, Molly." Young Dawson was standing beside her, looking a little ruffled. "I don't know who the devil Danny is or was; but this fellow says he's John Marston. You can't go throwin' your arms round a stranger's neck in the huntin'-field. It's simply not done."

"When I require your assistance on what is or is not done, Mr. Dawson, I will let you know," returned the girl, coldly. "Until then, kindly keep such information to yourself."

"Mr. Dawson!" The youth recoiled a pace. "Molly! what do you mean?"

But the girl was taking not the slightest notice of him; her eyes were fixed on the stranger, who was talking for a moment to David Dawlish.

"You forgot to take my cap," he said to the secretary, with a smile. "If you like I will send it along by post; or, if you prefer it, I have it on me now."

And at that moment it occurred. It was all so quick that no one could be quite sure what happened. Perhaps it was a horse barging into the black's quarters; perhaps it was the sudden flash of young Dawson's cigarette-case in the sun. Perhaps only Uncle David saw what really caused the black suddenly to give one wild convulsive buck and bolt like the wind with the girl sawing vainly at its mouth.

For a moment there was a stunned silence; then, with an agonized cry, Sir Hubert started to clamber into his saddle.

"The quarry!" His frenzied shout sent a chill into the hearts of everyone who heard, and half the hunt started to mount. Only too well did they know the danger; the black was heading straight for the old disused slate-pit.

But it was the immaculate Dawson who suffered the greatest shock. He had just got his foot into the stirrup when he felt himself picked up like a child and deposited in the mud. And mounted on *his* chestnut was the man in ratcatcher.

"Keep back—all of you." The tall, spare figure rose in the saddle and dominated the scene. "It's a one-man job." Then he swung the chestnut round, gave him one rib-binder, and followed the bolting black.

"Hi! you, sir!" spluttered Dawson, shaking a fist at the retreating figure. "That's my horse."

But no one paid the smallest attention to the aggrieved youth; motionless and intent, they were staring at the two galloping horses. They saw the man swinging left-handed, and for a moment they failed to realize his object.

"What's he doing? What's he doing?" David Dawlish was jumping up and down in his excitement. "He'll never catch her like that."

"He will," roared the cavalryman. "Oh, lovely, lovely—look at that recovery, sir—I ask you, look at it! Don't you see his game, man?" he turned to the secretary. "He's coming up between her and the quarry, and he'll ride her off. If he came up straight behind, nothing could save 'em. It's too close."

Fascinated, the field watched the grim race—helpless, unable to do anything but sit and look on. The man in ratcatcher had been right, and they knew it, when he had called it a one-man job. A crowd of galloping horses would have maddened the black to frenzy.

And as for the two principal performers, they were perhaps the coolest of all. For a few agonizing seconds, when the girl first realized that Nigger was bolting, she panicked; then, being a thoroughbred herself, she pulled herself together and tried to stop him. But he was away with her—away with her properly; and it was just as she realized it, with a sickening feeling of helplessness, that a strong, ringing voice came clearly from behind her left shoulder.

"Drop your near rein, Molly; put both hands on your off, and pull—girl—pull! I'm coming."

She heard the thud of his horse behind her, and the black spurted again. But the chestnut crept up till it was level with her girths—till the two horses were neck and neck.

"Pull, darling, pull!" With a wild thrill she heard his voice low and tense beside her; regardless of everything, she stole one look at his steady eyes, which flashed a message of confidence back.

"Pull—pull, on that off rein."

She felt the chestnut hard against her legs, boring into her as the man, exerting every ounce of his strength, started to ride her off.

The black was coming round little by little; no horse living could have resisted the combined pull of the one rein and the pressure of the consummate rider on the other side. More and more the man swung her right-handed, never relaxing his steady pressure for an instant, and, at last, with unspeakable relief, she realized that they were galloping parallel with the edge of the quarry and not towards it. It had been touch and go—another twenty yards; and then, at the same moment, they both saw it. Straight in front of them, stretching back from the top of the pit, there yawned a great gap. She had forgotten the landslip during the last summer.

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She saw the man lift his crop, and give the black a heavy blow on the near side of his head; she heard his frenzied shout of "Pull—for God's sake—pull!" and then she was galloping alone. Dimly she heard a dreadful crash and clatter behind her; she had one fleeting glimpse of a chestnut horse rolling over and over, and bumping sickeningly downwards, while something else bumped downwards too; then she was past the gap with a foot to spare. That one stunning blow with the crop had swung the amazed black through half a right-angle to safety; it had made the chestnut swerve through half a right-angle the other way to——

Ah, no! not that. Not dead—not dead. He couldn't be that—not Danny. And she knew it was Danny; had known it all along. Blowing like a steam-engine, the black had stopped exhausted, and she left him standing where he was, as she ran back to the edge of the gap.

"Danny! Danny—my man!" she called in an agony. "Speak—just a word, Danny. My God! it was all my fault!"

Feverishly she started to clamber down towards the still figure sprawling motionless below. But no answer came to her; only the thud of countless other horses, as the field came up to the scene of the disaster.

Sir Hubert, almost beside himself with emotion, was babbling incoherently; the secretary and Joe Ferrers were little better.

"Only Danny could have done it," he cried over and over again. "Only Danny could have saved her. And, by Gad! sir, he has—and given his life to do it." He peered over the top, and called out anxiously to the girl below: "Careful, my darling, careful; we can get to him round by the road."

But the girl paid no heed to her father's cry; and when half-a-dozen men, headed by David Dawlish, rode furiously in by the old entrance to the quarry, they found her sitting on the ground with the unconscious man's head pillowed on her lap.

She lifted her face, streaming with tears, and looked at the secretary.

"He's dead, Uncle David. Danny! my Danny! And it was all my fault."

For a few moments no one spoke; then one of the men stepped forward.

"May I examine him, Miss Gollanfield?" He knelt down beside the motionless figure. "I'm not a doctor, but——" For what seemed an eternity he bent over him; then he rose quickly. "A flask at once. There is still life."

It was not until the limp body had been gently placed on an extemporized stretcher, to wait for the ambulance, that the cavalryman turned to David Dawlish.

"Danny!" he said, thoughtfully. "Not Danny Drayton?"

"Himself and no other," replied the secretary. "Masquerading as John Marston."

The cavalryman whistled softly. "The last time I saw him was at Aintree, before the war. I never could get to the bottom of that matter."

"Couldn't you?" said David Dawlish. "And yet it's not very difficult. 'The sins of the fathers are visited'—you know the rest. He disappeared; and every single sufferer in that crash is being paid back."

"But why that dreadful quod to-day?" pursued the soldier.

"All he could get, most likely. Boddington's cattle are pretty indifferent these days." Dawlish glanced at the stretcher, and the corners of his mouth twitched. "The damned young fool could have had the pick of my stable if he'd asked for it," he said, gruffly. "Danny—on that herring-gutted brute—at Spinner's Copse! But he was always as proud as Lucifer, was Danny: and I'm thinking no one will ever know what he's suffered since the crash." And then, with apparently unnecessary violence, the worthy secretary blew his nose. "This cursed glare makes my eyes water," he announced, when the noise had subsided.

The cavalryman regarded the dull gloom of the old pit dispassionately.

"Quite so, Major," he murmured at length. "Er—quite so."

III.

"WELL, Sir Philip!" With her father and David Dawlish, Molly was waiting in the hall to hear the verdict. The ambulance had brought the unconscious man straight to the Master's house: and for the last quarter of an hour Sir Philip Westwood, the great surgeon, who by a fortunate turn of Fate was staying at an adjoining place, had been carrying out his examination. Now he glanced at the girl, and smiled gravely.

"There is every hope, Miss Gollanfield," he said, cheerfully.

With a little sob the girl buried her face against Sir Hubert's shoulder.

"As far as I can see," continued the doctor, "there is nothing broken: only very severe bruises and a bad concussion. In a week he should be walking again."

"Thank God!" whispered the girl, and Sir Philip patted her shoulder.

"A great man," he said, "and a great deed. I'll come over to-morrow and see him again."

He walked towards the front door, followed by Sir Hubert, and the girl turned her swimming eyes on David Dawlish.

"If he'd died, Uncle David," she said, brokenly, "I—I——"

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"He's not going to, Molly," interrupted the secretary. Then, after a pause, "Why did you put the spur into Nigger?" he asked, curiously.

"You saw, did you?" The girl stared at him miserably. "Because I was a little fool: because I was mad with him—because I loved him, and he called himself John Marston." She rose, and laughed a little wildly. "And then when Nigger really did bolt I was glad—glad: and when I saw him beside me, I could have sung for joy. I knew he'd come—and he did. And now I could kill myself."

And staunch old David Dawlish—uncle by right of purchase with many sweets in years gone by, if not by blood—was still thinking it over when the door of her room banged upstairs.

"A whisky and soda, Hubert," he remarked, as the latter joined him, "is clearly indicated."

"We'll have trouble with him, David," grunted the Master. "Damned quixotic young fool. He's got no right to get killed officially: it upsets all one's plans. Probably have to pass an Act of Parliament to bring him to life again."

"Leave it to Molly, old man." The secretary measured out his tot. "Leave it all to her."

"I never do anything else," sighed Sir Hubert. "What is worrying me is young Dawson."

"There's nothing really in that, is there?" David Dawlish looked a little anxiously at his old friend: as has been said before, he was no lover of young Dawson.

"There's a blood chestnut stone-dead at the bottom of a pit," returned the other. "However——"

"Quite," assented Dawlish. "Leave it to Molly: leave it all to her."

Which, taking everything into consideration, was quite the wisest decision they could have come to; it saved such a lot of breath.

They both glanced up as a hospital nurse came down the stairs. "Miss Gollanfield asked me to tell you, Sir Hubert," she remarked, "that the patient is conscious. She is sitting with him for a few minutes."

"Oh, she is, is she?" Sir Hubert rose from his chair a little doubtfully.

"Sit down, Hubert; sit down," grinned Dawlish. "Haven't we just decided to leave it all to her?"

"Well, John Marston! Feeling better?"

The man turned his head slowly on the pillow, and stared at the girl.

"What an unholy ——" he muttered. "How's the horse?"

The girl looked at him steadily. "Dead—back broken. We thought you'd done the same."

"Poor brute! A grand horse." He passed one of his hands dazedly across his forehead. "I had to take him—I couldn't have caught you on mine. I must explain things to your *fiancé*."

"My what?" asked the girl.

"Aren't you engaged to him?" said the man. "They told me——" The words tailed off, and he closed his eyes.

For a moment the girl looked at him with a great yearning tenderness on her face; then she bent over and laid a cool hand on his forehead.

"Go to sleep, Danny Drayton," she whispered. "Go to sleep."

But the name made him open his eyes again.

"I told you my name was John Marston," he insisted.

"Then I require an immediate explanation of why you called me darling," she answered.

He looked at her weakly; then with a little tired smile he gave in.

"Molly," he said, very low, "my little Molly. I've dreamed of you, dear; I don't think you've ever been out of my thoughts all these long years. Just for the moment—I am Danny; to-morrow I'll be John Marston again."

"Will you?" she whispered, and her face was very close to his. "Then there will be a scandal. For I don't see how John Marston and Mrs. Danny Drayton can possibly live together. My dear, dear man!"

Thus did the man in ratcatcher fall asleep, with the feel of her lips on his, and the touch of her hand on his forehead. And thus did two men find them a few moments later, only to tiptoe silently downstairs again, after one glance from the door.

"Damn this smoke," said David Dawlish, gruffly. "It's got in my eyes again."

"You're a liar, David," grunted Sir Hubert. "And a sentimental old fool besides. So am I."

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The DAYS OF HIS YOUTH

BY

JOHN PETER TOOHEY

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OUT into the corridor where three middle-aged charwomen were sloshing soapsuds and hot water trickled the echoes of Bessie Bellairs' reedy soprano :—

" And I'll always be true
To myself, dear, and you,
In my beautiful garden of dreams."

Mrs. O'Brien soused her brush in the foaming pail at her side and attacked the floor as if she bore it a grudge.

" True, is it, me daisy ? " she queried, scornfully, looking in the direction of the half-open door leading to the auditorium. " Ah, you'll be true to him as long as he keeps you well supplied with the money, but you'll come out of your garden of dreams, me lady, and take a walk somewhere else when the milch cow goes dry."

" Don't be too hard on the poor thing, Mrs. O'Brien," ventured Mrs. Anderson. " She's more to be pitied than blamed, as my poor husband used to say, may the Lord have mercy on his soul."

Mrs. O'Brien rose on her knees and turned a withering look upon her coadjutor. " Pitied, eh ? " she shot back with fine scorn. " Don't be wastin' your sympathies on stage women, Mrs. Anderson, or leastwise not on the kind that does be in these musical plays. Ain't I right, Miss Nobles ? "

The third woman, who had paused in her work to listen to the observations of her two companions, turned somewhat timidly toward Mrs. O'Brien. She was a sad-eyed creature whose face bore faint traces of a former beauty that one gifted with an imagination might have reconstructed into something a bit bold and flaming. Her eyes were large, dark, and deep-seated, and her lips were full. Her hair was streaked with white, but there were masses of it still, and the outlines of what once must have been a fine neck and lovely shoulders were revealed through her unkempt blouse, half open at the throat. She smiled a bit wearily as she made answer.

" Perhaps we shouldn't judge them, Mrs. O'Brien," she said, quietly. " They're so young and life is so interesting to them."

Mrs. O'Brien tossed her head contemptuously, dipped her brush, and began to scrub vigorously once more.

" Shure what do you know about it ? " she asked. " Wait till you've been mixed up with 'em as long as meself and Mrs. Anderson here and you'll sing another song."

The woman did not reply. She smiled wearily again and listlessly resumed her work. So she didn't know anything about them ? What difference did it make, anyway ? What use to even think about it ? And yet she couldn't help thinking. She paused again and stared straight ahead. Into her deep-set eyes there came a look of great wistfulness, and then she bent once more to her monotonous task.

Inside the theatre the experimental trials of the recently-maligned Bessie Bellairs' song were over for that morning and the chorus was rehearsing the dance steps of a ragtime number. Every now and then, above the sound of shuffling feet and the clamorous piano, could be heard the voice of Bennie Davidson, the stage manager, raised in angry criticism.

" Loosen up, girls, loosen up," he shouted. " Faster, faster, there you are—keep her going—lively ; all together, now, right turn, one, two, three—that's better ! One hour for lunch. Everybody back at two, and notes to teacher don't go if you're late."

Bennie lit a cigarette and strolled off with slouched shoulders. He was engaged in one of the most strenuous exploits of his career and his whole manner indicated a great strain.

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Meyerfield, manager of the roof restaurant-theatre where the famous Meyerfield Midnight Revue held forth for the jaded pleasure-seekers who insisted upon finishing off an evening at the theatre with still another show, had suddenly decided two days before to put on a new edition of this entertainment at two weeks' notice. Inasmuch as these shows were usually planned months ahead and rehearsed for from four to six weeks, it can readily be understood that there was reason for the terrific nervous tension under which Bennie Davidson was labouring.

"Get your idea tank working, Bennie," Meyerfield had said two days before. "Go the limit—don't spare the cash. It's up to you."

Bennie hadn't slept more than four hours since. At the present moment eight assorted song writers were seeking inspiration for "special numbers"; three artists were working feverishly on costume plates; six vaudeville agents were devoting all their energies to "digging up" new entertainers; Meyerfield himself was conducting diplomatic negotiations of a most delicate nature with a temperamental grand opera singer; and Ernest Hoffer, the great impressionistic scenic artist, was evolving a series of weirdly beautiful designs for stage settings. All these activities had been started by Bennie, whose brain was just about the busiest piece of mechanism then functioning in the great city. His imagination was running riot in search of some novel notion which might be utilized for an unusual, distinctive, and unique number. Bennie was famous for the novelties he always managed to put into the shows he staged, and he knew what the public and Meyerfield expected of him, but somehow this time he couldn't fix on anything that seemed to satisfy him. The show, of course, was still in embryo, but as plotted out so far it lacked the Big Idea. That was what Bennie was now searching for as he paced nervously up and down. Relaxing the tension finally he strolled out into the mirrored corridor, leaned against a plush-covered pillar, and gazed abstractedly at the three charwomen.

"It's wild times you seem to be havin' in there this morning, Mr. Davidson," remarked the talkative Mrs. O'Brien, looking up at him sympathetically. "Them linger-longer Lucys of yours seem to be dyin' on your hands."

Bennie laughed delightedly.

"You said a mouthful that time, old lady," he chuckled. "These rehearsals are cutting in on their sleep something terrible. They've got to get up at nine every morning. Isn't it sad? I've only got twelve days to get these dances ready, and they won't even start to begin to commence to behave."

Mrs. O'Brien snorted derisively and tossed her head.

"Dances?" she questioned. "Shure what do them lilies of the valley know about dancin'? I could shake a better foot meself, old as I am, than the most of 'em."

"I'll bet you could," responded Bennie, "I'll bet you could. You've got more life in you than——"

But the sentence died on his lips. He stood looking into space for a full half minute. The tired look in his eyes was replaced by an eager blaze of sudden interest. His stooped shoulders straightened and his body became taut once more. Then he started for Meyerfield's office at the end of the corridor on a half run, calling back over his shoulder to the startled Mrs. O'Brien:—

"You've given me the Big Idea, old lady. You're my pal for life!"

Meyerfield was in the middle of the dictation of a letter when Bennie bounced in on him.

"Don't say a word until I get through," he began, breathlessly. "I've just met the Big Idea out in the corridor. Mrs. O'Brien—you know, the stout old dame, that's been scrubbing floors here as far back as I can remember—well, she gave it to me. She said she bet she could shake a better foot than most of our girls. I told her I'd bet she could, too, and then the whole thing came to me. I'm going to have a charwomen's chorus—not a fake one—the regular goods. I'm going to take 'em all, fat ones and thin ones, just as they come—no make-up, tousled hair and shabby shoes—and I'm going to use 'em as a chorus. I'll get her to make up, of course, as near like one of 'em as she can. I'll get Billy Parsons to write a song—something lively, a good, snappy lyric—something about 'as we scrub, scrub, scrub—as we rub, rub, rub'—see what I mean? I'll make 'em all sing the refrain and do a dance. They'll be the funniest bunch of misfits any audience ever saw."

Bennie paused for lack of breath. Meyerfield assumed his most judicious and thoughtful pose, wrinkled his forehead, took a long pull at his cigar, and slowly let the smoke float out of his half-opened mouth.

"It's a novelty, all right," ventured Meyerfield, cautiously; "but you know I've made my reputation with beauty choruses and the last word in costumes. It's taking a chance."

"Contrast, old man," urged Bennie. "The others'll show off so much the better following this crowd. Are you on?"

"All right," replied Meyerfield, carefully. "Go ahead, but if it turns out a failure I'll never forgive you."

Bennie was out in the corridor again before the manager had finished his speech.

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"SIX ODDLY-ASSORTED FEMALES WERE LINED UP FOR INSPECTION. 'LADIES,' SAID THE STAGE-MANAGER TO THE CHARWOMEN, 'I'M GOING TO PUT YOU ON THE STAGE IN THE NEW SHOW.'"

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A messenger went scurrying for the charwomen, and in five minutes six oddly-assorted females, bewildered and dazed, were lined up for inspection. They were a strange contrast to the group of languid and lithe-limbed houris who stood about the corridor watching with scantly-concealed amusement. These were the famous Midnight Revue girls, accounted on two continents the most dazzingly beautiful array of stage girls in all America. They were just in from lunch, and they lounged around, wondering what strange whim had seized Bennie Davidson.

Only the woman called Miss Nobles gave evidence of ever having been destined for aught else than a scrub life in a drab world. The others laughed sillily when told by Bennie to stand in line. Only she flushed, as if conscious of the humiliation of the situation.

"Ladies," began Bennie. "I've got a nice surprise for all of you—it's a chance to get a little extra coin every Saturday night and to show our young ladies here that they're not the whole works. I'm going to put you on the stage in the new show."

Three or four of the Midnight Revue girls laughed mockingly at that. The charwomen looked uncomprehendingly at each other.

"Is it kiddin' us you are, Mr. Davidson?" inquired Mrs. O'Brien. "If you are, you ought to be in better business than makin' fools out of a crowd of poor women before the likes of these daffy-downdillys here."

"Nothing of the sort," replied Bennie. "I'm going to put you on with Bellairs in a charwoman number, and you're going to have a chance to shake your feet in a little dance. It's ten minutes' extra work every night and some extra money for all of you every Saturday. Rehearsals start to-morrow. I've got to get a song written. Not a word of this outside. It's our big surprise. Are you all willing?"

Mrs. O'Brien looked around at her associates.

"I'm for it," she announced. "I'm for it strong. We'll show these fancy birds that there's a fandago or two up our sleeves they know nothin' about. Are you with me, ladies?"

The Nobles woman found voice for the others.

"Of course we are, Mrs. O'Brien," she said. "Of course we are. It's a great opportunity, a most unusual opportunity."

"Freddie" Van Vleck was playing solitaire in his library and enjoying a finely-flavoured cigar. It was five o'clock in the afternoon, and "Freddie" always played solitaire at that time for exactly an hour. It was one of his fixed habits. Life as it is ordered in this day and generation was not to his liking. The rushing years had swept him along; they had whitened his hair and his moustache and his trim little imperial, but the soul of him hadn't changed.

"Freddie" was reshuffling the pack for a new deal when the quiet of the library was disturbed by the boisterous inrush of his grand-nephew, Richard Blackwell, an engaging young person of twenty, who had no respect for his uncle's sacred traditions and who was fond of "stirring up the old boy and watching him erupt."

"Uncle Freddie," he said, "I've got a proposition to make, and I'll bet you don't dare take me up."

"Not interested in dares this morning," replied Mr. Van Vleck shortly, as he slipped a red seven on a black eight. He paused for ten seconds to let this little pleasantry soak in, and then added: "However, for the sake of the respect I suppose I owe your dear mother's boy, I'll bite—what is it?"

"It's this way," began the young man, eagerly. "You see, it's my treat to-night with my little crowd, and I'm taking three or four of the fellows to see 'Oh, La, La' at the Garrick. I've got a box and there's an extra seat, and afterwards we're all going up to see the new Midnight Revue. I've got a front table. Of course, I know you never go to the theatre now; but I've told the fellows what a rare chap you are, and they're all on edge to meet you. You wouldn't change your mind and go, would you?"

Uncle Freddie slammed the cards down on the table and pushed his chair back noisily.

"I wouldn't go," he said, irascibly, "if the King of England sent a royal equerry with a handwritten invitation. Theatre, eh? There isn't any that I have any knowledge of. Your mother lured me into one, one night four years ago, after I'd stopped going for God knows how long; and of all the trash and drivel and inane stuff and nonsense I ever heard in all my life, that show was the limit."

The old gentleman, puffing from the strenuosity of his outburst, dropped back in his chair and lit his cigar again. His nephew, his eyes a-twinkle with merriment, watched him for a full half minute, and then said quietly:—

"I won't press the point, uncle. I know how you feel. Besides, I realize that you haven't the enthusiasm for the theatre that goes with youth, and you can't be expected to stick around until two or three o'clock in the morning with a crowd of young fellows. It was foolish of me to have thought of it."

"Freddie" Van Vleck turned on him fiercely.

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"I've lost my enthusiasm, have I?" he stormed. "I'll show you whether I have or not. I'll go to your fool shows—both of 'em, and I'll stay to the end. I may be sixty-five, but my heart's as young as yours is, and I'm going to prove it to you. I'll tell Jamieson to harness up the bays and I'll meet you in the lobby of the theatre. I suppose you'll go in one of those fool taxis? Don't be late. I never was. Always made it a rule to get in for the overture."

"Freddie" always dressed for dinner, but this night his niece noticed that there was something particularly impeccable about his appearance. His scant, grey hair was brushed with especial neatness, and there was a flush on his cheeks which was unusual. He was actually whistling as he entered the dining-room, something she had not heard him do for many years.

"You're gay to-night, Uncle Freddie," she said, pleasantly.

"Am I, my dear?" he asked. "Yes, perhaps I am. Vagrant memories, Mary; foolish, vagrant memories stirred up by that boy of yours. I'm going out with him to-night. Crowd of his young friends. Insane thing to do. I suppose I'll be bored stiff; but somehow he said something that—well, I just couldn't help going. Don't wait up for me."

Uncle Freddie didn't enjoy "Oh, La, La." He was prepared for the worst, and, in his opinion, he got it. It was really a superior sort of a piece, as such entertainments go, presented with an air of daintiness and delicacy against a background of rare beauty; but there wasn't a thing in it from beginning to end that satisfied this dweller in the theatrical past, who sat in the front of the box and presented a picture of chastened resignation throughout the evening. When the final curtain fell and the audience filed out into the lobby, Richard ventured the suggestion that perhaps his uncle wouldn't care to bother about going to the Midnight Revue. Mr. Van Vleck turned on him sharply.

"I'm what is called a bitter-ender," he said. "I'm going to stick to the finish. It certainly can't be any worse than this thing we've seen."

When they were seated Richard began to point out the celebrities who were filing to their places, with a certain glib air of assurance that rather tickled Uncle Freddie and caused the first smile of the evening to spread over his face.

"You're certainly well posted, Dick," he said, good-naturedly. "I used to be myself, boys, a great many years ago. Knew half the house on an opening night. We used to have our suppers after the show, not during it; but when in Rome, you know. Different times—different ways. Call that waiter and I'll show you how to order something that may give a little zest to the subsequent proceedings." He was all animation now. He adjusted his glasses, surveyed the menu, and crisply ordered an elaborate supper.

The jazz band over in the corner began to play the overture, and an expectant hush settled down over the crowded auditorium. Presently the gorgeous salmon-pink velvet curtains which hid the little stage slowly parted and revealed Bessie Bellairs, all in shimmering white, standing near a tall palm-tree, the two silhouetted against a background of deep blue of such splendid richness that it almost hurt the eyes. The picture was full of the brooding mystery of night in the desert, and was greeted with an outburst of spontaneous applause. The beautiful figure in white moved a little, and then there came over the footlights the words of "The Garden of Dreams." When the curtains fell again Richard plucked his uncle's sleeve.

"That's a pretty start, isn't it?" he inquired.

"Beautiful picture," responded Mr. Van Vleck, "but why did she sing? She's got a voice like a dull saw. Is that the best they can do?"

The band was swinging into a lively number now, and presently out on the floor of the auditorium itself, through doors that led into the sides of the proscenium, there tripped the members of the famous beauty chorus. A pretty little blonde with a boldly arresting smile slid out in front of them and began to sing:—

"For I'm a flippity-flip,
A zipitty-zip,
A sure enough, high-speed gal."

The chorus girls' bodies, swaying, and feet beating a wild tattoo, swung out toward the edge of the dancing floor until they almost touched those seated at the front tables and sang the refrain into their very faces. Two or three of the bolder spirits among the men in the front ranks pursed their lips in heavy playfulness as if inviting a kiss. Mr. Van Vleck backed out of range of the particular siren directly in front of him and averted his head. When all the encores, rapturously demanded by the audience by the pounding of little hammers on the tables, had been sung, and there was a momentary lull in the festivities, the old gentleman looked up at his grand-nephew.

"Nice exhibition," he said, ironically. "Dainty, delicate, and refined. Has a subtle allure all its own. So this is the modern idea of a good show, is it? And people turn up their noses when you mention

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the artists of other days. Why, these women are just empty-headed fools not fit to tie the shoe-strings of the stage girls I knew thirty years ago—not fit to tie their shoe-strings. No voices, no personality—just a silly sort of beauty. It's sickening, that's what it is, just sickening."

An eccentric comedian did an acrobatic dance that sent the crowd into uproars of merriment, but Uncle Freddie remained unmoved by his antics. Then there was a pause while the spectators consulted their programmes. A line in them conveyed this information :—

"BESSIE BELLAIRS AND HER 'LADY FRENS' IN A BIG SURPRISE."

Richard turned wisely to his uncle and his friends.

"This is going to be the big hit of the show," he said, in a half-whisper. "I've got a friend who knows Trixie Turner—she's one of the girls—and she told him all about it. Wait till you see it."

The jazz band struck up a slow, insinuating sort of a melody as Bessie Bellairs slouched out on the floor attired in a faded-looking black calico dress. She also wore a dirty gingham apron and disreputable-looking shoes; her hair was rolled up in an untidy knot on the top of her head; her face was smudgy; her arms were bare to the elbows, and she carried a pail and a scrubbing-brush. She awkwardly sidled into a position in the centre of the floor, and the audience burst into clamorous applause that was a tribute to a most effective bit of make-up. The pseudo-charwoman rubbed her nose with the back of her free hand and began to sing, in a throaty voice, the written-to-order song suggested by Bennie Davidson, who was anxiously peering from behind the slit in the curtain up on the stage. The chorus had a catchy lilt that set feet tapping all over the theatre :—

"We scrub the floor
From eight to four;
It's always rub, rub, rub,
And then we leave,
Would you believe?
To cook the old man's grub.
These other dames,
They all have flames
And cars and sealskin coats.
We work, they play,
That's why we say:
'By gum, they get our goats.'"

As the audience frantically hammered on the tables for an encore, out from the little doorways came the charwomen, three each side, swinging along in an awkward imitation of the little dance that Bessie Bellairs was now doing, and singing the chorus of the song. They were as unkempt, as frowsy and as toil-stained as if they had just got up from their knees after a hard day's work, and each of them carried a bucket and brush. They seemed tremendously self-conscious, and their efforts to conceal this made the whole effect of their entrance something so utterly incongruous, so grotesquely ridiculous, that the audience roared with laughter. Richard leaned over towards his uncle and whispered hoarsely :—

"They're the real goods, Uncle Freddie—they're the regular women who scrub out the building here. That's what Trixie Turner says. They've never been on the stage before."

"Freddie" Van Vleck didn't answer him for a moment. His gaze was riveted on a woman at the end of the line—the woman Mrs. O'Brien knew as Nobles. Something about her appearance gave him a vague feeling of anxiety. She seemed more certain in her movements than the others, more at ease as she swung around with them and went swishing up the floor to the rollicking strains of that inane song.

"That woman at the end has been on the stage before, Dick," he said, quietly. "The others are poor foolish idiots who ought to be home in their beds; but that woman knows what she's doing and how to step out. She looks like someone I once knew. I can't remember who."

The charwomen turned again and came marching down once more toward the front-row tables. The woman "Freddie" Van Vleck was looking at seemed full of a certain joyousness that caused many in the audience to direct the attention of their companions to her. She shook her head rollickingly, and she made a queer little gesture with her right arm and tossed her head as she stressed the last line of the song—"By gum, they get our goats." The two little gestures brought back a flood of memories to "Freddie." They came with a rush. Nellie Nobles—that's who it was. That was the provocative way she used to finish her songs in other days. Nellie Nobles—"the imp of mischief"—that was what they called her—Nellie Nobles, who had been the toast of a thousand midnight suppers many years before! He looked intently again and was satisfied that it was she, though what he saw seemed to him at first like some monstrously cruel caricature of the image which came peeping out from one of the pigeon-holes of memory, though, he finally admitted, there was much of the old charm still there. The audience demanded encore after encore and the women came back again and again.

Finally the lights went up for the interval

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and the dancing-floor was filled with a shrugging, shuffling throng of patrons. In the blaze of illumination Richard missed his uncle, who had quietly slipped away from the table unseen during the numerous encores and was speculating on the reason for his absence, when the head-waiter came over and whispered confidentially in his ear:—

"The old gentleman said I was to tell you that he had paid the bill and that he'd seen enough of the performance to satisfy him," he said. "He seemed sort of excited."

Richard laughed and repeated the message to his friends."

"Uncle Freddie's fed up," he said. "I'm in for a course of lectures on the decline and fall of the modern stage. The second one is scheduled for breakfast in the morning. I'll bet the old boy is snoozing already on the way home."

Uncle Freddie, however, was not snoozing, and he was not on his way home. At that particular moment he was slipping a note and his card into the receptive palm of a grizzled stage-doorman and was murmuring quite jauntily:—

"I'd like this to reach Miss Nobles, if you please."

"Yes, sir, yes, sir," responded the doorman. "Miss Nobles—did ye say? She's a new wan to me. I don't seem to place her."

"Freddie" coughed nervously.

"She's a—she's a new one to a great many, I fancy," he said, quickly. "She's one of the—that is, I mean to say she's one of the—a—one of the—middle-aged ladies."

"One of the charwomen, is it?" inquired the doorman, incredulously, as he looked the trim old gentleman over from his shiny top-hat to his patent leather boots, and then, as "Freddie" nodded, he went inside, mumbling under his breath: "The like of him asking for the likes of her—it beats me!"

While the stage-doorman delivered his message "Freddie" looked round. He seemed full of strange emotions. Could it by any possible chance be his heart that was fluttering like that, fluttering just as it used to flutter in days agone, when, in a tingle of nervous apprehension, he had sent his card in to a lovely lady and awaited her response to his scribbled invitation to "a little supper at Del's"?

It was really only five minutes before Miss Nobles herself appeared, but it seemed nearly an hour to "Freddie." He saw her as she came through the door, and he felt for just a passing second a stab of regret that he had come. And yet she looked fresher and considerably more comely than she had inside the theatre. There was a bit of white ruching round the collar of her black blouse. "Freddie" noticed that in the first glance of quick appraisal. He noticed, too, that while her dark suit was well worn, it fitted her, and that, though it was a warm spring night, she wore gloves. They were white cotton, but they were gloves. Self-respect, he thought, was still alive in the heart of this friend of his youth. He stepped forward, made a courtly bow, and took one of her gloved hands in his own.

"It is Nellie Nobles, isn't it?" he asked, a bit chokily. 'The Nellie Nobles—' the imp of mischief.'"

The woman involuntarily shrank back.

"It is," she said. "God help me, it is. And who are you and what do you want? I read the name, but it meant nothing—Van Vleck—I can't remember—Frederick Van Vleck—it can't be Freddie Van Vleck——"

She broke off in a little hysterical gasp. Her eyes were gleaming now. She clutched his hand convulsively.

"That's who it is, Nellie," he replied, huskily. "Foolish old Freddie Van Vleck. Lots older, a bit wiser, but true to the old days, Nellie, true to the old days."

She looked at him for many seconds, still gripping his hand, as if fearful of losing hold of this bit of her happier past. Then a surge of tears flooded her eyes and trickled down her cheeks. "Freddie" coughed apprehensively, withdrew his hand, wiped away a furtive fleck of moisture or two in his own eyes, and took her gently by the arm.

"My carriage is outside," he said, quietly. "I'm going to take you to supper. No other Lothario waiting, is there?"

She smiled sadly at his little jest and permitted herself to be led through the door to the carriage. She stopped as she was about to step inside.

"I can't," she said. "I'm not dressed. I'd be ashamed. You'd be ashamed of me. It wouldn't do, Freddie, it wouldn't do."

A quiver of delight shot through her companion's alert frame. "Freddie"—how easily she had slipped back through the years to address him with the friendly familiarity of other days. No woman had called him that without the prefix of "uncle" for—well, he couldn't remember. He gently touched her arm and guided her inside.

"You're my guest, Nellie," he said. "We'll go to a quiet place—just a little table in a corner and an old-fashioned chat."

The innate chivalry of his bearing, the gentleness of his manner, overcame her objections and restored to her a certain feeling of pride that had been missing these many years. When they reached the restaurant and were escorted to a table in the deserted little room upstairs, her eyes were dry once more and she carried herself with a poise that would have caused Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Anderson to gape with amazement,

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could they have seen her. "Freddie" was as wide-awake as if it were midday, instead of three long hours after his usual bed-time.

His companion was gazing at him with unseeing eyes. A surging flood of memories was sweeping through her mind, memories stirred from their resting-places by the voice of the gallant old gentleman across the table, by the first touch of kindness, of sympathetic fellow-feeling that had come into her life for years without number. He startled her out of her reverie.

"Not as lively as Riccadonna's, eh, Nellie?" he was saying. Remember that party there that night you made your big hit, the night Jennie Joyce got ill? Gad, I can see you now—you were nineteen then—white and red hussar uniform, wasn't it?—swagger stick, too—I remember you in the wings, just before your turn, laughing at Mat Humphries and me in the front row. Remember the crowd in your room afterwards singing the chorus of that song of yours? Here's the wine, Nellie. Fill it up, waiter, right to the brim. A toast, Nellie, a toast—'I give you the imp of mischief.' No tears, Nellie, old girl, no tears. A laugh for the sake of the old days. That's better—that's better. Waiter's gone for the food, Nellie. Let you and I sing that song of yours."

He touched her hand across the table. A tender wistfulness lay upon her face now, and somehow it seemed to soften and to smooth it. She looked round to see if the waiter was really gone and then she began the lilting chorus of the old song, singing it with a certain snap and dash that sent "Freddie" into the seventh heaven of delight as he hummed an obbligato.

"Men say I intrigue 'em;
Well, maybe that's so,
But I never fatigue 'em
Like others I know.
I'm queen of the revels;
Come, who'll be my knight?
I'll chase the blue devils
Of care out of sight."

"Freddie" jumped up and drew the wine from its icy bed in the holder under the table. He filled both their glasses, first tossing a napkin over his arm and mimicking the deferential manner of a particularly servile waiter. It was an old trick of his that she remembered, and she laughed merrily. She grew serious again as he resumed his seat.

"Do you know, Freddie," she said, quietly. "I haven't had a glass of champagne until to-night for nearly twenty years—long years, old friend, and hard ones."

Her companion's smile relaxed and he touched her hand again, ever so gently.

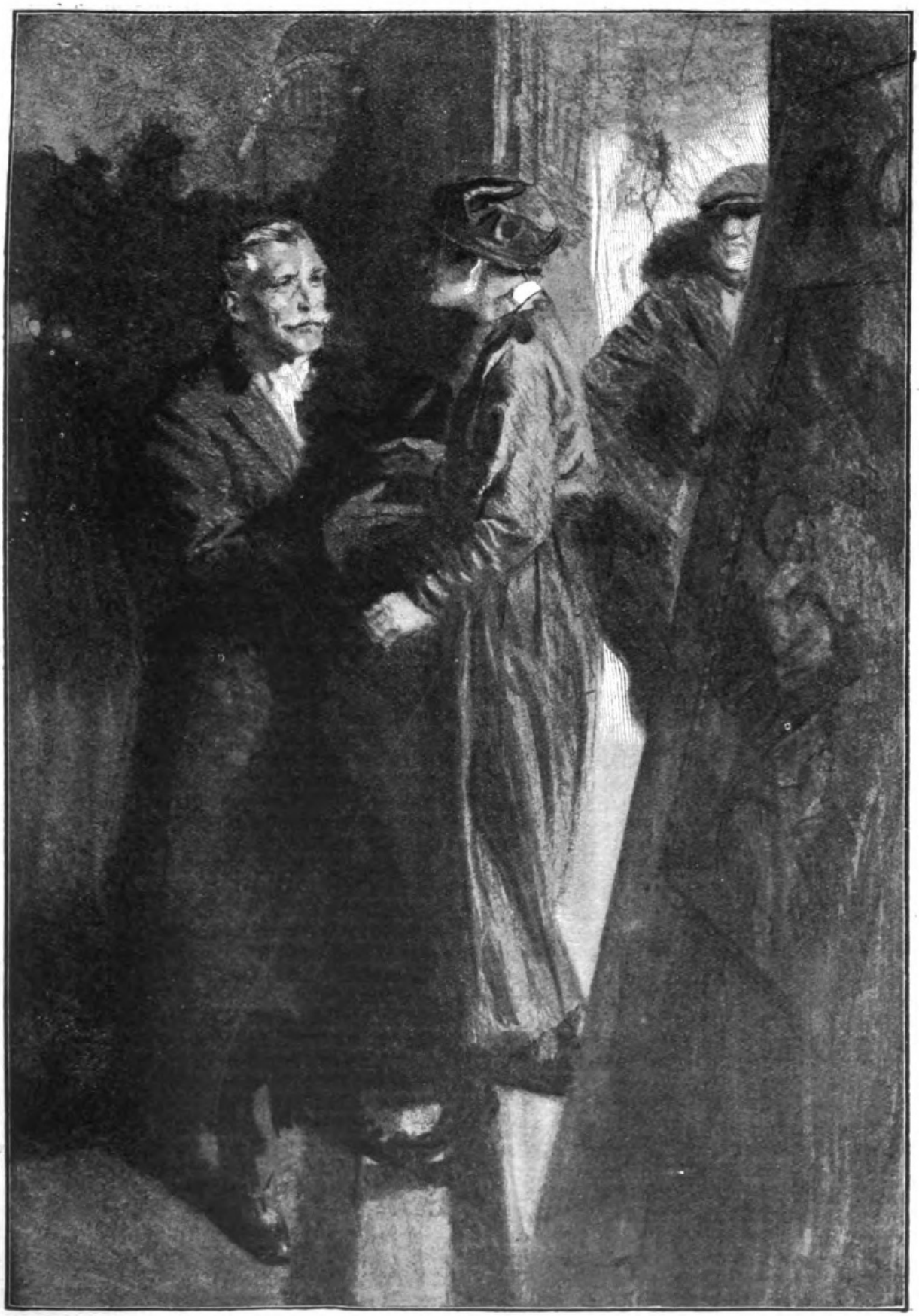
"I suppose they must have been, Nellie," he said, sympathetically. "I should have asked you about yourself before. It's been so like a dream—this hour—that I've felt as if we'd drifted out of the present back into the past. Here's the supper, and when the waiter's gone you'll tell me all there is to tell."

And so Nellie Nobles poured out to an understanding listener the story of the years that had intervened since the days when her name had passed from the newspapers and the lips of the fickle public. She told it simply, making no bid for sympathy, and yet as she spoke the heart of her friend of other days was torn with the sadness of it. Bobby Devereaux—wild, impulsive Bobby—figured in the early chapters. He had slipped out of her life as suddenly as he entered it. She had left the stage to travel in far places with him, and he had flung away his last coin and then his careless life in a sordid gambling house in Shanghai. She had sung in a music-hall there; there had been a long illness and no friends; she had worked her way back across the Pacific as a stewardess on a Japanese liner and had found herself on Market Street, San Francisco, one lovely spring morning, with world weariness in her heart and only three silver dollars in her purse. Pride had restrained the impulse to telegraph to friends in New York for aid; she had found work in a dingy concert-hall—but the returns were pitiful; her sparkle had vanished and she could no longer intrigue audiences with her singing.

There had been a marriage—she didn't go into much details about this—except to say that it had been an unfortunate one that had brought her miseries undreamt of and that had undermined the last remnants of her spirit. She had drifted on the winds of adversity back to the East; a last spark of her old-time self-reliance and pluck had driven her to seek a theatrical engagement, but the bloom of youth was forever gone and her name meant nothing to the newer figures in managerial offices. She had become a housekeeper in a lodging-house, and she had shut out the memories of old days so completely that they rarely came back, except when they were stirred by the vagrant echoes of some half-forgotten melody or by a bit of news in the daily paper chronicling the death of some friend of her youth. There had been a fire that had destroyed the lodging-house and all her little belongings with it, and she had been obliged to find immediate employment.

"And then I saw an ad., Freddie," she said, sadly. "'Women wanted for work at the Apollo,' it said. It didn't say 'girls.' It said 'women,' and I thought, with a little thrill, that maybe there might be a last chance for me on the stage, but it was charwomen they wanted. I turned away, but

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"'THAT'S WHO IT IS,' HE REPLIED. 'FOOLISH OLD FREDDIE. LOTS OLDER, A BIT WISER, BUT TRUE TO THE OLD DAYS, NELLIE.'"

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there was a rehearsal going on and the young girls were dancing and—well, I used to say to myself that I'd go down on my knees to get back in the theatre, and that's just what I did. Then they staged the absurd thing you saw to-night and I got my last chance. Sorry sort of a chance, Freddie, a sad little joke. I went through with it. I couldn't help it. To-night's the end, though. I can't do it again. I can't stand people poking fun at me—they didn't do that once upon a time."

"Of course they didn't, old girl," murmured Freddie, soothingly.

He paused reflectively and regarded her closely.

"Nellie," he asked, impulsively. "Don't you think you could get out of your rut and come back to life again—come back with something of the flavour of the old days?"

Her body straightened and her shoulders went back as if some subtle, electric impulse from the dynamic old gentleman across the table had suddenly charged her whole being.

"Maybe," she said, a little startled at her daring, "maybe I could."

The waiter found them still chatting animatedly a half hour afterwards when he turned out all the lights in the room except the one on their table. They took the implied hint, but they were still discussing some matter of apparently great importance as they went downstairs to the waiting carriage.

"Freddie" was the first down to breakfast in the morning, though he had only had four hours sleep. He was as crisp and fresh as the unopened morning paper at his plate. Richard dropped in lazily when he had nearly finished his coffee and toast.

"Morning, Dick," said "Freddie." "Late hours, I see. Highly reprehensible. Why didn't you get home early as I did and wait and see the rest of that show some other time? That's what I'm going to do. By the way, I've got a social obligation to repay. How'd you and that crowd of young bloods like to be my guests to-night at the theatre? Fine lot of boys that—I want to do the right thing!"

"To-night, Uncle Freddie?" asked Richard. "Did you say to-night?"

"That's what I said," responded the old gentleman, cheerily. "You and your chums meet me at the club," he said, "and we'll all have dinner and go from there. Six-thirty sharp, mind."

Richard began calling up his friends later in the day in a kind of mental daze.

"I can't understand it," he confided to Billy Bayard. "Never saw him quite so lively. I don't know where he's taking us, but we'll trail along——"

Billy Bayard's chuckle was quite audible over the wire.

"Never do to miss that party, Dick," he laughed. "Oh, we'll all be amongst those present. You can bet on that."

The dinner at the Players' Club was a brisk and lively affair. "Freddie" had chosen "The Balkan Bride," an operetta with modern trimmings, for his second night's excursion into the realms of make-believe, and though he approved of it no more than he had "Oh, La, La" the night before, he was not so apathetic in his demeanour. He kept up a running fire of sarcastic comment from the rear of the box that delighted the youngsters more than the comedian's best "gags." No one was really surprised when he announced after the curtain had fallen that he thought they "might as well take another look at that fool thing up on the roof" now that they were in the neighbourhood. He hadn't seen all of it, he said, and he confessed that he was a bit curious to see the end.

"I want you boys to loosen up to-night," he said, jauntily, when they were seated. "I'm going to. The longer I stayed last night the better I liked the show."

It was champagne to-night. It began to flow presently, and under its influence Uncle Freddie became more expansive than before. He even applauded a bit when Bessie Bellairs sang "The Garden of Dreams," and when the "zipitty-zip" person came skyhooting in his general direction he actually waved his hand. When the charwomen came on for their chorus after the Bellairs girl had sung the verse of the "rub, rub, rub" song, he gave signs of intense excitement.

"Great idea, this," he said, eagerly, to his guests. "Richest thing in the show. Watch it carefully."

And then he raised his glass and actually drank to the woman at the left end, a woman in whose deep-set eyes there blazed a strange light and whose cheeks were flushed through her make-up. She saw him do it and she smiled back at him. A dozen people in the front row caught the incident and laughed.

"The old boy's making an appointment," said a blatant voice. "Little Buttercup's made a hit."

"Freddie" didn't hear this, but Richard did and somehow he felt a little ashamed. What terrible thing was this rejuvenated uncle of his going to do next, he asked himself? The women were awkwardly lumbering off now and the little hammers of the spectators were beating a furious tattoo on the tables.

Bessie Bellairs came swinging on again for the encore, the women following after. "Freddie" was leaning forward now and looking full at the woman on the left. He was

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clutching the table-cloth nervously with one hand and holding one of the little hammers in his other and keeping time with the jazz band. Bessie Bellairs, one hand on her hip and the other swinging her pail, poised herself to sing. A movement behind her attracted her attention and she turned. The woman on the left was leaving her position in the line and was stepping forward, her face agleam with lively fun. The band leader hadn't noticed and the musicians swung into the opening bar of the chorus. The leading lady was so petrified with astonishment that she forgot to open her mouth.

The woman on the left sang with such verve and such comic gusto that before she was half through she seemed to have everyone in the audience in a mood of joyous abandon. People on all sides caught the infection of her personality, were moving their heads in time to the music, humming as many of the words as they could remember, tapping their feet and gently pounding their hammers on the tables in front of them. There was a *flair* in her singing that gave a new fillip to the proceedings after the thin-voiced effort of Bessie Bellairs. The gentle hammer-taps grew into a noisy uproar when the chorus was finished and clamorous applause swept the theatre. "Freddie" was pounding on his table with two hammers with all the vigour and relentlessness of a riveting machine.

"Make way, ladies and gentlemen," he was shouting, "make way for the 'imp of mischief.'"

Bessie Bellairs had slipped off the stage when Nellie Nobles took the encore away from her, and at that instant she was screaming at Bennie Davidson in the wings in strident protest.

"You stop her this minute," she shouted, "or I walk out to-night and I never come back. You can take your choice—me or this charlady."

The leader, receiving no instructions and fearful of a fatal dead pause in the entertainment, had struck up the chorus of the song again to still the tumultuous din, and Nellie Nobles was singing it once more with even greater relish and flavour than before. She was alone now. The startled and speechless Mrs. O'Brien and her associates had backed off through the proscenium doors in dumb bewilderment. She swung into the centre of the stage, set down her bucket, put her arms akimbo on her hips, and tossed her head from side to side with a backward tilt that was irresistible in its appeal.

Suddenly, as she swung into the last line, the lights went out and the theatre was plunged in darkness except for the red glow of the exit globes. Bennie Davidson had yielded to the ultimatum of Bessie Bellairs and had taken this means of getting the presumptuous volunteer off the stage. She was prepared for something like this, however, and though the jazz band stopped there could be heard out of the darkness the last words of the song, cutting the silence with a comic inflection :—

"By gum, they get our goats."

And then a rollicking laugh, followed by cries of "Give her a chance" and "Fair play" began to sound out from all sides, shrilly punctuating an ever-increasing volume of thunderous applause. A certain excited elderly gentleman in the front row was shouting :—

"Stick it out, Nellie. Stick it out. We'll fight it out if it takes all the summer. Won't we, boys ?"

"You bet we will, Uncle Freddie," came from half-a-dozen lusty young throats.

Bennie Davidson was plunging out of the proscenium door to grab the offender and try to pull her off when he found his arm clutched in the firm grip of Meyerfield.

"Get those lights on," shouted the latter, "and give that woman a chance. There'll be a riot if you don't. She's the biggest hit we've had for years."

Bennie yelled an order, the electrician turned a switch and the lights flashed up, revealing Nellie Nobles still standing in the centre of the stage with her hands on her hips and a saucy smile on her flushed face. The audience broke into an uproar.

The jazz band struck up the insinuating melody of the song again and she sang the chorus once more. Then she motioned to the leader for an encore and swung across the stage in an eccentric dance that was so full of the essential spirit of burlesque that the audience rocked with laughter. She finished, bowed, kissed her hand to the house with all the light grace of a ballet dancer, and ran off through the half-open door on the right and into the very arms of Meyerfield, who had been watching the proceedings with eager intentness.

A veritable tumult reigned in the theatre. The racket was deafening.

"Take another encore," shouted Meyerfield. "Give 'em something else if you've got anything up your sleeve. You're over the top all right and still going some."

Nellie smiled up at him and ran out once more. She held up her hand to restrain the applause.

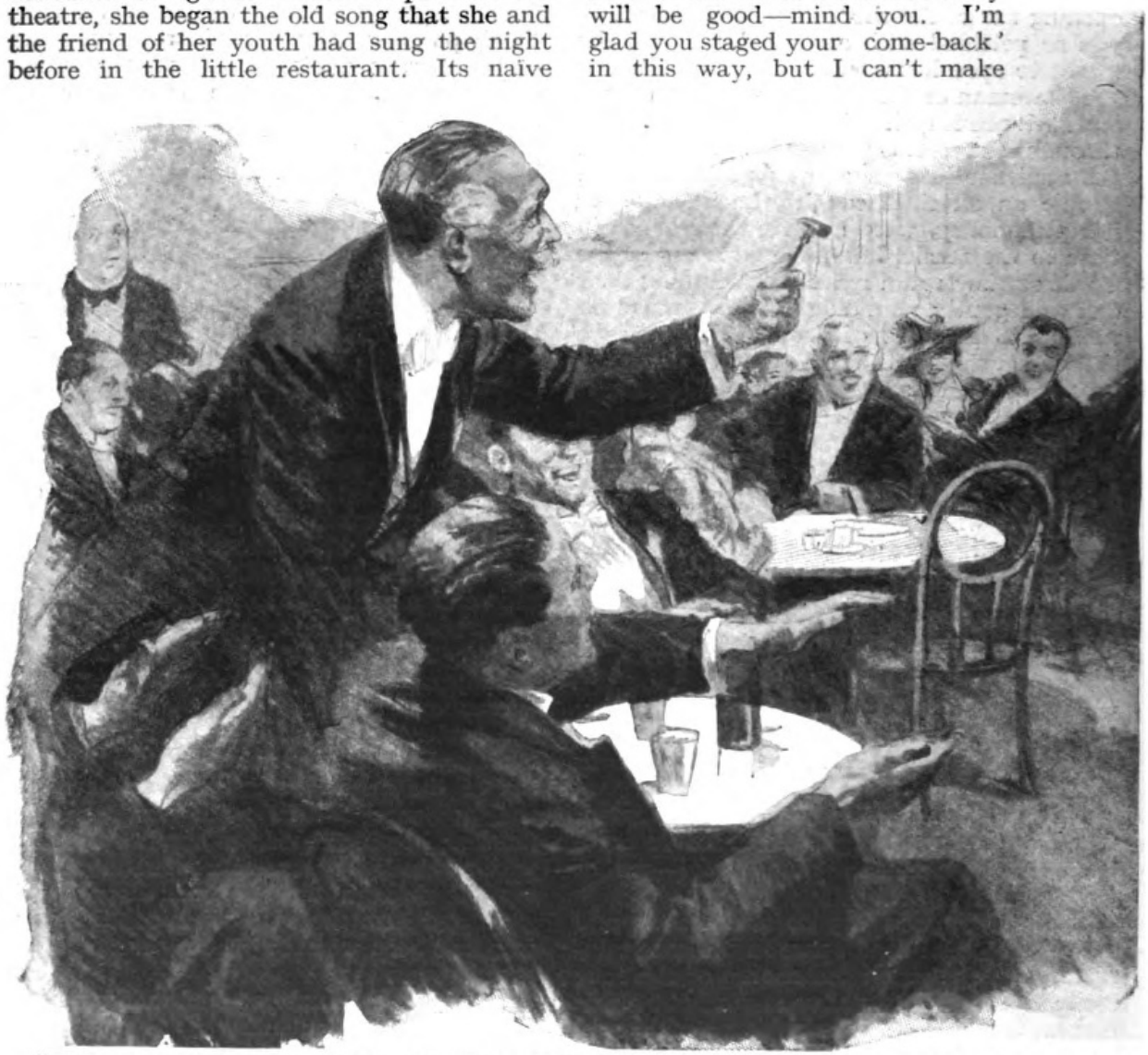
"Dear, good friends," she said, good-naturedly. "I must ask your forgiveness for not knowing the sort of song that's popular nowadays. If you'll bear with me, though, I'll try to sing something other audiences used to like many years ago. It's a funny sort of a song for a charwoman

to sing, and I hope you'll believe me when I tell you that I wasn't dressed exactly like this the last time I sang it on the stage. The orchestra doesn't know it, I'm sure, and I'll have to sing it without music, but I think I'll be able to get through. I had a little rehearsal last night."

She smiled at a certain old gentleman as she said this, and a certain old gentleman smiled back. Then, in response to urgent demands to "go on" from all parts of the theatre, she began the old song that she and the friend of her youth had sung the night before in the little restaurant. Its naive simplicity, in contrast to the vulgar banality of the songs of the day, won the audience instantly and there was encore after encore.

Five minutes after she had bowed for the twentieth time she was up in the dingy dressing-room that she shared with Mrs. O'Brien and Mrs. Anderson, listening to eloquent remarks from Meyerfield.

"So you're Nellie Nobles?" he was saying. "I might have known it. I told Bennie Davidson that first day I saw you at rehearsal that you looked different from the other women. I certainly must say that you've made the best 'come-back' I ever heard of. It's going to be town talk to-morrow and you're going to stay here with us. Bellairs has walked out. You'll do that song to-morrow night and anything else that comes into your head. I'll get Billy Parsons and a bunch of others to work up some new songs for you and I'm going to blazon your name all over the town. And the money will be good—mind you. I'm glad you staged your 'come-back' in this way, but I can't make out why you didn't look me up in the regular way and ask for an engagement."



"NELLIE NOBLES WAS SINGING THE SONG ONCE MORE. SHE SWUNG INTO THE CENTRE OF THE IRRESISTIBLE IN

The faint flicker of a smile came and went on the woman's face.

"Nobody knew," she said, quietly, "except an old friend—a very old friend. You see, it wasn't altogether my idea. He—well, he really wrote this new act for me."

Down in the side street a rejuvenated "Freddie" Van Vleck, his top-hat set at a

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STAGE, SET DOWN HER BUCKET AND TOSSED HER HEAD WITH A BACKWARD TILT THAT WAS ITS APPEAL."

decidedly rakish angle and his eyes fairly dancing with delight, was escorting a group of young men to the stage door and addressing various and sundry remarks to them.

"I was sure of it," he was saying; "sure that if one of those girls I used to know in the old days ever got a chance to show up against a crowd of these so-called beauties who are clogging up the stage to-day she'd show 'em up in no time. Old fogey, am I, Dick? Well, here we are. Let me remind you, young gentlemen, that you are going to meet one of the finest women and one of the greatest artistes in this country and that——"

The stage-door swallowed them up, and if the policeman lounging in the shadows near by had had a properly attuned ear he might have caught the faint flutter of wings as the eternal spirit of romance flew away on the winds of the morning in quest of a new adventure.

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"THE UNCROWNED KING OF ARABIA"

COLONEL T·E·LAWRENCE



THE MOST ROMANTIC CAREER OF MODERN TIMES.

By Lowell Thomas

IV.

"By the Grace of Allah, I, Auda Abu Tayi, warn you to quit Arabia before the end of Ramadan. We Arabs want this country for ourselves. Unless this be done, by the beard of the Prophet, I declare you proscribed, outlawed, and fair game for anyone to kill."

THE above was the personal declaration of war issued by the most picturesque brigand of Arabia, Auda Abu Tayi, the Bedouin Robin Hood. Three copies of it written in goat's blood on wide strips of sheepskin were delivered by Howeitat couriers mounted on racing camels to the Sultan of Turkey, to Djemal Pasha, the Viceroy of Syria and Arabia, and to the Mutessarif of Kerak, governor of a province of the old Ottoman Empire on the edge of the desert near the southern end of the Dead Sea. The author of this edict is the greatest Bedouin hero of modern Arabian history and the most celebrated fighting man the desert has produced for four generations. He and Emir Feisal and Colonel Lawrence, who led the desert armies in the land of the Arabian Nights, are the central figures of the present-day songs and poems of the nomad tent-dwellers of the East.



COLONEL T. E. LAWRENCE.

Auda is the chieftain of the Abu Tayi subsection of the great Howeitat tribe which roams the country between the head of the Gulf of Akaba and the lower end of the Dead Sea and Central Arabia. He is tall, straight, lean, and powerful, and although sixty years of age he is as active and sinewy as a panther. His lined and haggard face is pure Bedouin. He has a broad low forehead, high sharp-hooked nose, greenish-

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brown eyes which are inclined to slant outward, large mouth, black pointed beard, and moustache tinged with grey. In accordance with the Howeitat style, his lower jaw is clean-shaven.

Auda is famous throughout Arabia for his reckless daring, his sweeping hospitality, his wit, his feuds, and his extreme polygamy. He has been married twenty-eight times, and says he has hopes of raising it to fifty before he dies. He has been wounded twenty-two times, and in his battles has seen all his tribesmen hurt and most of his relatives killed.

Under Auda's leadership the Howeitats have become the finest fighting force in Western Arabia, and Colonel Lawrence regarded them as the backbone of his wild desert army. Of him, Lawrence once remarked to me: "This old Bedouin hero is as hard-headed as he is hot-headed. His patience is extreme. He receives advice, criticism, or abuse with a smile as constant as it is charming. Nothing on earth would make him change his mind, or obey an order, or follow a course of which he disapproved."

His mind is packed with stories of old raids and epic poems of fights. He speaks of himself in the third person, and so sure is he of his own fame and place of prominence in Arabian history that nothing delights him more than to roar out stories against himself. He is modest, simple as a child, direct, honest, kind-hearted, affectionate, and warmly loved even by those to whom he is most trying—his friends!



MOHAMMED ABU TAYI,

ONLY SON OF AUDA ABU TAYI, AND THE YOUNGEST WARRIOR IN THE HEJAZ ARMY. ALTHOUGH ONLY ELEVEN YEARS OF AGE, HE FOUGHT THROUGH THE WHOLE DESERT CAMPAIGN.

Old Auda Abu Tayi loses no opportunity of adding to his enemies. The Arabian Revolution appealed to him largely because it furnished him with the ideal excuse to "take on" and declare personal war against the Turkish Government.

The Howeitat, in many ways, are the most picturesque of all the desert peoples. They cause more trouble, have more enemies, and take part in more blood-feuds than any other tribe. They are the most obstinate



AUDA ABU TAYI,

THE GREATEST FIGHTER THE ARABIAN DESERT HAS PRODUCED FOR FOUR GENERATIONS. HE HAS KILLED MORE THAN SEVENTY-FIVE MEN IN PERSONAL COMBAT, AND HAS BEEN MARRIED TWENTY-EIGHT TIMES.

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and unruly and quarrelsome people I have ever met. They seem to have no fear. One small boy of the Howeitat tribe will take a rifle and engage in battle against twenty men. No man in the tribe will recognize any other as a sheikh, and they accept Auda as their leader merely because of his amazing daring and prowess. The Howeitat are unable to unite among themselves even when attacked from outside. About the only thing they have in common are wounds and the tribal marks on their camels.

The Howeitat tribe is divided into two great subdivisions: the Ibn Jazi and the Abu Tayi. For fifteen years the two sections have waged relentless war against each other, until "Shereef" Lawrence succeeded in persuading both of them to unite with Hussein and Feisal to drive out the Turk.

Even then Lawrence found it necessary to keep the two subsections attached to different parts of his army in order to prevent them from leaping at each other's throats. Both were willing to obey Lawrence's orders so long as they were not brought face to face with each other, in which event they regarded themselves as in honour bound to start a row.

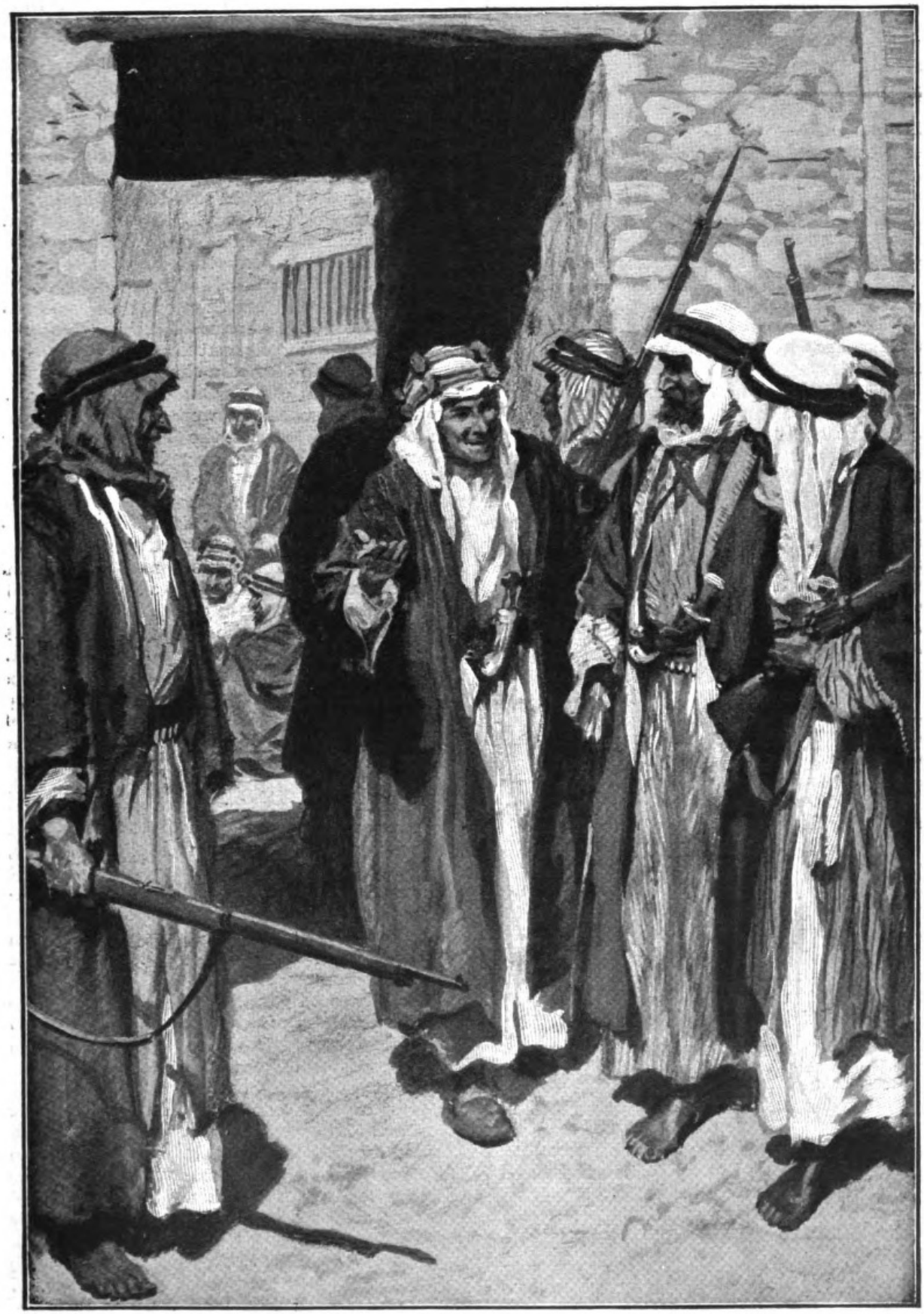
I recall an instance of how Lawrence managed to handle this delicate problem. It was in June, 1917. We were attending a conference in the courtyard of Emir Feisal's palace at Akaba. Seated in a circle around the Emir were thirty shereefs and sheikhs, all heads of prominent tribes. Among them were six Howeitat sheikhs of the Ibn Jazi subsection. Suddenly I saw a swift change sweep over the usually impassive countenance of the young Englishman. Jumping to his feet, he slipped noiselessly, but with lightning speed, to the doorway of the courtyard. A group of fierce-looking men were about to enter, but Lawrence, with some witty remark which made them laugh, led them off in a different direction. Later, when I questioned him regarding his speedy exit, he informed me that the warriors who had been about to enter were none other than the renowned Auda, his cousin Mohammed, and some of the other leading fighting men of the Abu Tayi section of the Howeitat. He added if Auda and his companions had strolled on into the palace courtyard, a bloody battle would have been staged right in front of Emir Feisal himself. Such an incident might easily have led to the total disruption of the Arabian army. During the last seventeen years, Auda Abu Tayi is said to have killed more than seventy-five men in hand-to-hand combat. One day I asked him how many of his victims had been Turks. He replied that none of them were. He explained that he never counted Turks because he regarded them as women!

Of course, the Howeitat and the Druses are blood enemies, and Lawrence more than had his hands full keeping them from killing each other instead of Turks. In 1912 fifty of Auda's fighting camel-men had captured eighty Druse horsemen in battle. This is striking evidence of the fighting ability of the Howeitat, because one horseman is usually considered as worth two camel-men in a fight, owing to the fact that a Bedouin can manœuvre a horse much more rapidly than a camel. Ever since that engagement the Druses had been on the alert, hoping some day to take the Howeitat by surprise and annihilate them.

When Auda heard that Hussein, the Grand Shereef of Mecca, had started a revolt against the Turks, he and his fearless followers jumped on their steeds, dashed down across the burning sands, and swore on the Koran that they would make the Shereef's enemies their enemies. A great banquet was held in honour of the occasion. While they were dining, Auda happened to recall that he had a set of Turkish false teeth in his mouth. Jumping up from the feast, he dashed out of the tent and smashed them on a rock. For two months he was in such agony he could eat nothing but milk and boiled rice. When Lawrence came down from Egypt Auda's mouth was giving him so much trouble that it was necessary for the young British lieutenant to send back to Cairo for a British dentist, who came down and made a special set of Allied teeth for old Auda.

He takes a wild delight in making his friends uncomfortable. At times the inimitable Auda seems seized with a demon of mischief, and in large gatherings shouts appalling stories of the private matters of his host or guests. For instance, on one occasion he came into the tent of his cousin Mohammed, and in a loud voice told us how villainously his cousin had behaved at El Wijh. A Bedouin's tent is divided into two parts, one for the women and one for the men, separated by a little curtain of goat's-hair cloth. So, of course, Mohammed's wives could hear what Auda was saying. Naturally they were deeply interested. In vivid and racy style he described how his cousin had bought a beautiful necklace of pearls for his favourite wife, but had given it to a siren in El Wijh instead. This tale, fanciful though it was, caused a great commotion in the household of Mohammed, and made his life unbearable for several weeks.

Lawrence once remarked to me that Auda, like Cæsar, had the gift of keeping his own country free, but all its borders a great ring



"A GROUP OF FIERCE-LOOKING MEN WERE ABOUT TO ENTER, BUT LAWRENCE, WITH SOME WITTY REMARK WHICH MADE THEM LAUGH, LED THEM OFF IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION."

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of enemies. Even the great Nuri Shalaan, as well as all of Auda's other friends, went in terror lest they might in some way offend against his pleasure.

His name means "Father of Flying." I recall the day when Auda took his first flip in an aeroplane. Instead of showing signs of fright he insisted on his pilot, Captain Furness Williams, taking him higher and higher. When they at last slipped back to earth after a half-hour of stunting and playing leap-frog over the date-palms where Solomon used to sit fanning himself beside the lapping waters of the Red Sea, he expressed great delight at the experience. His one regret was that he had no rifle with him, so that he might have shot everybody in Akaba.

Auda is a born brigand, in fact as much so to his friends as to his enemies. Frequently he would come down to Akaba to pay his respects to Captain R. G. Goslett, one of Lawrence's associates, who superintended the Service of Supplies. Of all the tribes the Howeitat are the most open and shameless beggars. They wearied Goslett day and night with their preposterous demands. In his charming and polite way, Auda would suggest to Goslett that the gift of ten bags of flour might be acceptable. On one occasion Goslett became a bit irritated, and suavely turned the conversation off to the topic of camels. Nothing further was said about the flour, but an hour later one of Goslett's men rushed breathlessly into his tent with the information that Auda and his followers had broken into the Supply Depot, loaded their camels with twenty bags of flour, and disappeared into the "blue."

All Bedouin Arabs carry some sort of a good-luck charm. The talisman which hangs about Auda's neck is probably the most extraordinary to be found in all Arabia. It is a tiny copy of the Koran about an inch square. For this amulet he paid two hundred pounds in gold. One day he displayed it to us with great pride, and Lawrence discovered that it had been printed in Glasgow! The original cost-mark was still faintly visible inside the cover. The price was eighteenpence.

Auda Abu Tayi's home is on a mud-flat eighty miles east of Akaba. During the campaign Lawrence told the old brigand much about life in Europe, which caused him to want a house for a home instead of a goat's-hair tent. The first obstacle that confronted him was the labour problem. He solved this, however, by raiding a Turkish garrison and carrying off fifty prisoners. These he put to work digging wells. After that job was finished he promised to give them their liberty if they built him a beautiful house. So they constructed a forty-room palace, but owing to lack of timber were unable to put a roof over it. The ever-resourceful Auda immediately thought of a happy plan. Calling his warriors, they galloped off across the sands to the Hejaz railway, overpowered a passing Turkish patrol, and carried off thirty telegraph poles, which now form the framework for the roof of this Arabian knight's castle.

Auda has only one son living. All the others have been killed in raids and feuds. Young Mohammed Abu Tayi is eleven years of age. He is so tiny that his father picks him up by the scruff of his neck and swings him up on his camel with one hand. The lad fought beside his father and Colonel Lawrence like a veteran throughout the entire Arabian campaign. He carried a short rifle, which he used with great skill. One day early in the campaign, when they were starting off on an expedition against the Turks, Lawrence asked him if he had ever been on a raid before.

"Yes," replied little Mohammed; "thanks be to Heaven, this is my fifth."

He was so small that his father, afraid lest he should fall asleep on his horse while on the march at night, and drop off and be injured, usually stuffed him into one of his own great saddle-bags, where the swaying of Auda's camel would lull him to sleep and dreams of raids and Jinns until the red sun arose above the desert horizon.

Next to Auda, Mohammed el Dheilan is the chief figure of the Howeitat. He is taller than Auda, and more massively built. He is a square-headed, thoughtful, intelligent man of forty-five, with a sou- humour and a kind heart carefully conr cealed beneath it. According to Lawrence, in his youth he was notoriously wild, but reformed himself the night he was condemned to be hanged by Nevris Bey, Sami Pasha's staff officer, and has repaid many of the injuries he once wrought. He acts as business manager of the Abu Tayi, and frequently as their spokesman. His tastes are rather luxurious, and his ploughed land at Tafileh and his little house at Maan introduced him to luxuries which took root amongst the tribe. Hence the mineral waters and the parasols of a Howeitat Ghazzu. Mohammed is greedy, richer than Auda, more calculating, deeper—but a fine fighting man too, and one who knows how to appeal to everything in his hearers' nature, and to bend them to his will by words.

Zaal Ibn Motlog is Auda's nephew. He is about twenty-five, with petite features, carefully curled moustache, polished teeth, trimmed and pointed beard, like a French professional man. He, too, is greedy, sharp as a needle, of no great mental strength, but

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trained for years by Auda as chief scout to the tribe, and therefore a most acceptable and dashing commander of a raid.

Auda Ibn Zaal is the fourth great man of the Abu Tayi. He is silent and more usual in type than Auda, Mohammed, or Zaal, but the Howeitat flock to his side when there is a raid, and say that in action for concentrated force he is second only to Auda, with some of the skill of Mohammed, super-added.

Lawrence, of course, has seen all four chiefs under fire frequently, and saw in them all a headlong unreasoning dash and courage that accounted easily for the scarred and mutilated figures of their tribesmen.

Lawrence remarked, while we were trekking across the desert of Forbidden Arabia, that the handling of Arabs is an art, not a science, and with many exceptions and no obvious rules.

I had asked him to give me an idea of what he considered the best way of dealing with the nomad Bedouins. My motive in asking this was simply to try to extract from him in his own words something of the methods which had enabled him to accomplish what no other man had ever been able to do. He replied in a manner indicating that he thought I wanted the information simply to assist me in dealing with the Bedouins with whom we were living at that time. Had he suspected my real purpose, he would have turned the conversation into other channels.

"The Arabs form their judgments on the externals we ignore," he began. "Therefore it is vitally important that a stranger should watch every movement he makes and every word he says during his first weeks of association with these people. Nowhere in the world is it so difficult to atone for a bad start as in the Arabian desert. However, once you succeed in gaining their confidence, you can do pretty much as you please with them, as well as many things with yourself which would cause them to regard you as an outcast if done at first."



MOHAMMED EL DHEILAN,

ONE OF THE RICHEST NOMADS IN THE DESERT, AND SECOND CHIEFTAIN OF THE GREAT HOWEITAT TRIBE, WHICH WAS THE BACKBONE OF COLONEL LAWRENCE'S ARMY.

To illustrate the importance placed on externals, Lawrence told me about an Allied officer who once went up-country, and the very first night was the guest of an Howeitat sheikh. He sat down on a rug with his feet stretched out in front instead of tucked under in Arab style. Bedouins dislike looking at one another's feet. To sit with your pedal extremities in front of you is as much a sign of ill-breeding with them as it would be with us to put our feet on our host's lap! With the Arabs it is also a sign of bad breeding to choke over food. They believe it a sign that a man is greedy if he chokes, and say the devil has caught him.

Riding a short distance behind us in the caravan was a chief of the Shammar Arabs, who had a great scar across his face. Pointing to it, Lawrence remarked, "That chap, while dining with Ibn Rashid, a ruler of North Central Arabia, happened to choke. He felt so humiliated that he jerked out his knife and slit his mouth right up to the carotid artery in his cheek, merely in order to show his host that a bit of meat had actually stuck on one of his back teeth!"

Our Bedouin companions never used knives and forks, but would reach into the various dishes on the table with their hands. However, it is regarded as bad form to eat with one's left hand.

The battle of Seil-el-Hasa will serve as an illustration of the manner in which Lawrence handled the Arabian army. A Turkish regiment under the command of Hamid Fahkri Bey, composed of infantry, cavalry, mountain artillery, and machine-gun squads, was sent over the Hejaz railway from Karak, south-east of the Dead Sea, to recapture the town of Tafileh, which had fallen into the hands of the Arabian army the previous week. The Turkish regiment had been hurriedly formed in the Hauran and Amman and was short of supplies. When the Turks

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" GOODS WERE BEING BUNDLED INTO THE STREETS, WHICH WERE PACKED WITH MEN AND

came into contact with the Bedouin patrols at Seil-el-Hasa they drove them back into the town of Tafileh. Lawrence and his Shereefian staff had laid out a defensive position on the south bank of the great valley in which Tafileh stands, and Shereef Zeid, youngest of the four sons of King Hussein, occupied that position during the night with five hundred regulars and irregulars. At the same time Lawrence sent most of the baggage of his army off in another direction, and all the natives of the town thought the Arab army was running away.

" I think they were," Lawrence remarked to me as he recounted the story. Tafileh

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WOMEN. MOUNTED ARABS WERE GALLOPING UP AND DOWN, FIRING WILDLY INTO THE AIR."

was panicky, and as Dhiab-el-Auran, the busybody sheikh, had turned in reports of the dissatisfaction and treachery of the villagers, Lawrence went down from the housetop before dawn into the crowded streets to listen to what was being said. It was, of course, an easy matter for him to conceal his identity in the dark, dressed in the voluminous Arabian robes. There was considerable criticism of King Hussein, and the populace was decidedly disrespectful, although not disloyal. Everyone was screaming with terror. Goods were being bundled into the streets, which were packed with men and women. Mounted Arabs were galloping up and down, firing

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wildly into the air, and the flashes of the Turkish rifles were outlining the farther cliffs of the Tafileh gorge. Just at dawn the enemy bullets began to fall, and Lawrence went out to Shereef Zeid and persuaded him to send one of the officers with two fusils mitrailleurs to support the Arab villagers, who were still holding the southern crest of the hills. The arrival of the machine-gunners stimulated the Arabs to attack again, until they drove the Turks back over another ridge and across a small plain to the Wady-el-Hasa. Lawrence's men took the ridge, but were held up there, and found the main body of the Turkish army posted just behind it. The fighting became very hot, and there were huge bursts of Turkish machine-gun fire and heavy shelling. Zeid hesitated to send forward reinforcements, so Lawrence went up to the position of Abdullah, the machine-gunner, seven miles north of Tafileh, and on his way met him returning. He had had five men killed and one gun put out of action, and was out of ammunition. They sent back urgent messages to Zeid to send forward a mountain gun, any available machine-guns, and what men he could collect to a reserve position which was at the southern end of the little plain between El-Hasa and the Tafileh valley.

After Abdullah had gone back because of lack of ammunition and to get reinforcements, Lawrence went on up to the front, where he found things in rather a precarious state. The ridge was being held by just thirty Ibn Jazi Howeitat, mounted, and about thirty villagers. He could see the Turks working through the pass and along the eastern boundary of the ridge of the plain, where they were concentrating the fire of about twenty machine-guns, and flanking the rather obvious little mount which the Arabs were holding. They were meanwhile correcting the fusing of their shrapnel, which had been grazing the whole top of the hill and bursting over the plain. And as he sat there they began to sprinkle the sides and top of the hill quite effectively. The loss of the position was obviously only a matter of minutes. German aeroplanes came up and did not improve our chances.

Lawrence gave the Motalga horsemen all the cartridges that he could collect, and the Arabs on foot ran back all over the plain. Lawrence was among them. Since Lawrence had come straight up the cliffs from Tafileh his animals had not caught up with him. The mounted men held out for fifteen minutes more, and then galloped back unhurt. Lawrence collected his men in the reserve position on a ridge about sixty feet high, commanding an excellent view of the plain. It was now about noon. They had lost fifteen men, and had only eighty left, but a few minutes later several hundred Ageyl and some of his other men with a Hotchkiss automatic machine-gun came up. Lutfi-el-Aseli joined them with two more machine-guns, and they held their own until three o'clock, when Shereef Zeid came up with mountain artillery and more machine-guns, and with fifty cavalrymen and two hundred Arabs on foot. Meanwhile the Turks had occupied their old front line. Lawrence had their exact range, and he paced it off personally while they were retreating back to their reserve position. Lawrence brought all their artillery to the top of the ridge to make a demonstration, and then he sent the cavalry to the right to work up beyond the eastern boundary ridge. They were fortunate enough to be able to get forward without being seen until they had turned the Turkish flank at two thousand yards. There they made a dismounted attack. Meanwhile over one hundred Arabs of the Aimi tribe, who had refused to fight with them the previous day because they were not satisfied with the amount of loot they were receiving, came up and joined Lawrence's force. There are few Bedouins who can refuse to get into a good fight when they see one coming on. Lawrence sent his left flank, and they crept down behind the western ridge of the plain to within two hundred yards of the Turkish Maxims. The ridge which the Turks occupied at that time was of a flint-like rock, so that entrenchment was impossible. The ricochets of the shells and shrapnel as they struck the flint boulders and glanced off were horrible, causing heavy losses among the enemy. Lawrence ordered the men on his left flank to fire an unusually heavy burst from their Hotchkiss and Vickers machine-guns at the Turks manning the Maxims, and they succeeded in wiping the latter out. Then he ordered his cavalry to charge the retreating Turks from the right flank, while they in the centre, with the infantry and the banners, also moved forward. At sunset they occupied the Turkish lines and chased the Turks back past their guns into the Hesa valley. When it was dark Lawrence's men gave up the pursuit, principally because they had had no food since the previous day, and it was unusually cold. They had put to flight a whole Turkish regiment, Hamid Fahkri being among the slain.

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The LOVERS

BY

F. BRITTEN AUSTIN

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

HE opened the door into darkness and fumbled for the switch. The spacious, beautifully-furnished living-room of the flat—long, dark bookcase filled with mellowed leather bindings; large, soft bear-skins compensating for the insufficiency of the delicate Persian carpet on the parquet floor; a few precious prints spaced with an exquisite reticence upon the walls; an Oriental bibelot here and there emphasizing the quiet charm of English eighteenth-century furniture with its touch of the cunningly grotesque; two great leather-covered chairs by the fireside—was suffused with soft light.



He stood in the doorway—tall, lean, handsome, forceful with a touch of asceticism—and smiled to the corridor.

"Here we are!" he said, his voice on a note of happiness. "At last!"

He stretched out his arms to the girl upon the threshold. She came into the light—tall almost as he, long fur coat half-open over her tailor-made costume, finely-modelled head poised in a graceful, winsome upturn of the face, smiling at him in a radiance of eyes and mouth—and, on the movement of an irresistible impulse, cast herself into his embrace.

"At last!" she echoed. "Oh, Jim, dear!—at last—at long last!"

He held her, and she snuggled into his shoulder, face upturned to his, drawing his kisses down to her with the magnetism of her lips.

The quaint enamel clock upon the mantelpiece ticked, just heard, the passing seconds of eternity, the only sound in the silence of their union.

Then, with the long breath of recovery from the timeless swoon of a kiss prolonged to its uttermost limit, she turned her head slowly to gaze about the room.

"Oh, Jim!" she said, in affectionate reproach. "And you told me you were a poor man!"

He shrugged his shoulders, his lips mobile in a little smile.

"Well, dear," he replied, in whimsical apology, compared with the daughter of a man who owns half a city—compared with what you might have had!" He looked into her eyes. "Helen! You won't regret? They'll rub it into you—the title you've thrown away—the position in society—what they'll be pleased to term your hole-and-corner marriage——"

She laughed happily.

"Oh, Jim! I've got you and you've got me—and nothing else matters—it seems to me that you and I are the only two people in the world!" She assured herself of a tightening of his embrace with a touch of her hand on his as she looked up into his eyes with a slow smiling shake of the head that affirmed her love. "As if only you and I had ever existed—and had always loved! As if all through eternity we had waited for this! As if I were born to be just Jim Dacres' wife!"

He looked down upon her, eyes into eyes.

"Darling!" His voice was low and earnest in a sincerity beyond doubt. "Jim Dacres' wife you are—and, please God, I'll never let you go!"

With one more kiss she disengaged herself, came into the centre of the room, threw her fur coat back from the shoulders with a smile that invited the assistance he was prompt to give.

"Are we all alone?" she asked, glancing round, struck by the quietude of the flat.

"All alone, dear," he replied, folding her coat over a chair. "I told Mrs. Wilkinson she could go out. I thought it would be

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good to have it all to ourselves for this first evening—you and I alone in Paradise, darling!" He kissed her, drew her towards the fire. "Warm yourself, my beauty—and pretend it is my heart!" He squeezed her shoulders with his broad, strong hands.

She shook her head at him in roguish reproof, as she spread her fingers—the new gold ring upon one of them—before the blaze he stirred.

"Pretty, pretty!" she rebuked him. "Where has Jim Dacres learned to make love, I should like to know!"

"In your eyes, dearest," he replied, smiling into them. "In your eyes that open right back into a soul that knows immemorial secrets and knows them all as love!"

She felt quietly for his hand and held it, without a word, through moments where speech was profanation.

Then, with a long breath, feminine curiosity awakening in her, she turned her head and glanced once more around the room.

"It's charming, Jim!" she asserted. "I didn't know you had so much taste. Where did you get all these beautiful things?" She left the fireside, began to roam about the room, peering into cabinets, picking up one precious object after another, turning over the pages of the books that lay upon the tables.

He watched her lithe, graceful movements with admiration.

"All over the place," he answered, negligently. "China, Japan—a few in Italy——"

"And this?" she asked, holding up a large crystal ball, supported in a lotus cup upon the back of a carved ivory elephant studded with amber and turquoise and coral, its feet upon an ivory tortoise. "What is this?"

"Oh—that! I got that in India. Some old crystal-gazer's outfit. It's a few hundred years old—symbolizes the universe, you know. The world rests upon an elephant and the elephant upon a tortoise. I don't know what the tortoise stands on."

Her face was bright with interest.

"And have you ever looked into it?"

"Of course not." His tone was contemptuous. "I don't go in for that sort of thing. I didn't buy that—an old Hindu priest gave it me—a nice old chap who was good enough to adopt me more or less, years ago now."

"Oh, Jim! Do let us look into it!" Her voice was ecstatic in a sudden excitement. "Do let's look!"

"You won't see anything," he emphasized his pessimism in a grudge at the interest she diverted from him to this inanimate object. "It's all rot, you know—only people with brain-sick imaginations ever see things—or think they see things."

"Oh, but do let's try!" She came across to him, the crystal in her hand. "Do, there's a darling!" The appeal of the kiss-pouted lips in the face turned up to him, eyes bright with ingenuous vivacity, was irresistible.

He shrugged his shoulders with large good-humour.

"All right—but it's waste of time."

"Is anything waste of time when we are together, dear?" She nestled up to him, drew the kiss that was inevitable. "It's all part of the romance. Now, be good and do as I tell you. Switch off the lights—the firelight is enough."

He obeyed, with a gesture of tolerant complaisance that could refuse no whim. The room relapsed into shadows shifting in the blaze of the fire that he had stirred.

"Now come and sit close by me here," she dictated, delightfully imperious to this tall, strong man, seating herself in one of the big chairs by the fireside. "There is room for two. That's right." He squeezed his long body into the seat beside her. She held up the crystal ball. "Now, you hold it with one hand and I will hold it with one hand—like this!" With her free hand she clasped the hand that remained on his knee. "That's all I want to see, dear—our joint fates, linked together." Her voice was soft and tender, thrillingly sincere. "Just you and I—for ever—past or future, darling, what does it matter?—it's all one long life that is only real when you and I touch." She finished with a sigh of happiness.

He responded in a gentle pressure of her hand. Together they stared into the crystal sphere they jointly held. Minute after minute passed in silence, in a pervading sense of intimate communion where their pulse-beats, in the contact of their hands, regulated themselves to an identical rhythm.

"I see nothing," he murmured, vaguely disappointed; "nothing at all."

"Patience!" she breathed, intent on the crystal, but sparing him a little squeeze of the fingers in recognition of his presence. "Look—keep on looking!"

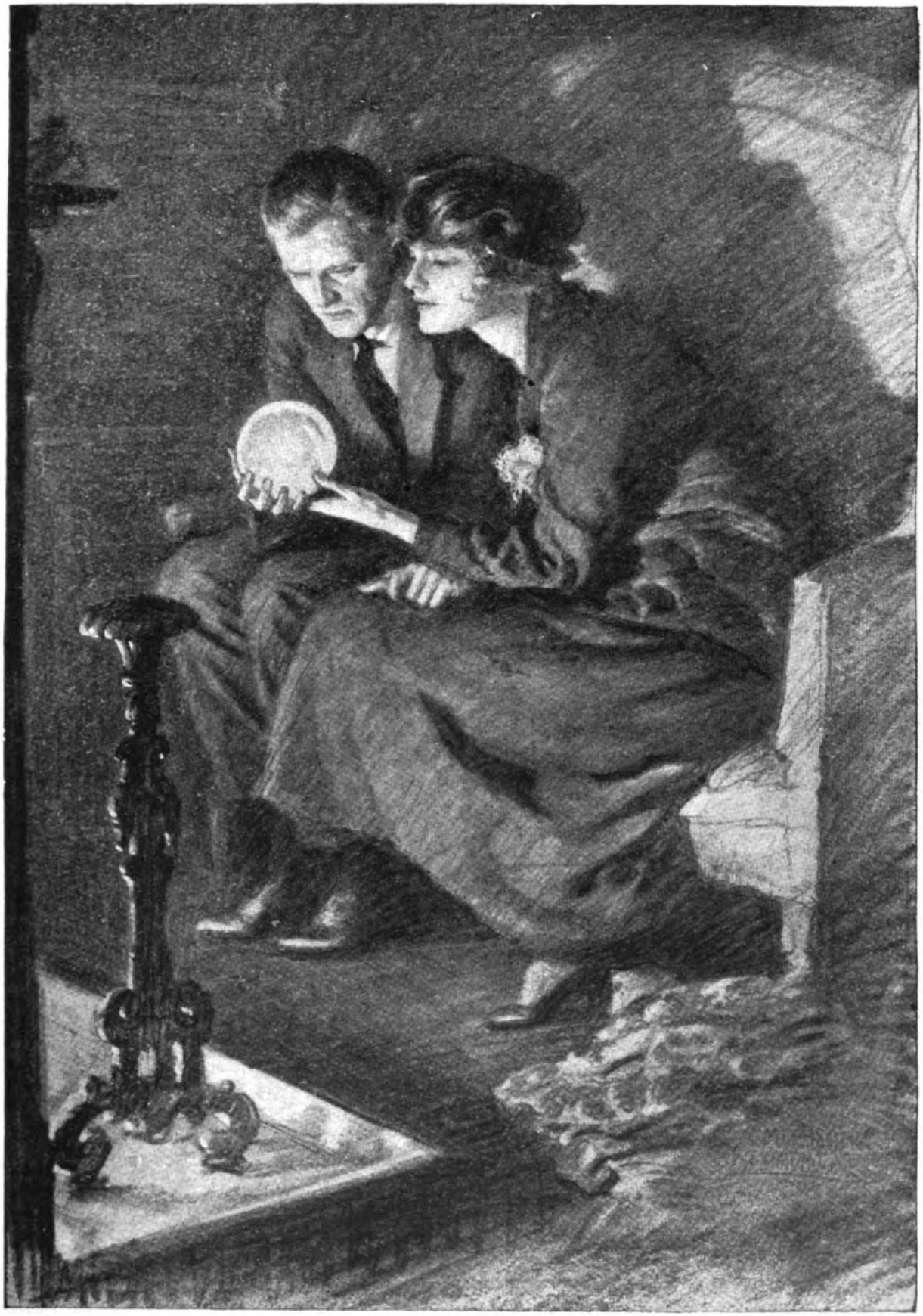
Again there was silence. The ticking of the clock upon the mantelpiece became almost hypnotic in its monotony. The fire dulled down, its light no longer reflected in leaping flashes in the crystal.

"Look!" she whispered. "It's clouding over—going milky! Do you see?"

He nodded assent, unwilling to break the spell by speech, mysteriously awed as he, too, saw a milky cloud suffuse the depths of the crystal. Holding their breath, they waited, closely linked, for they knew not what of vision.

As they stared into it, almost unconscious now of their own bodies, of the muscular effort that held the crystal globe in unvarying focus from their eyes, they saw the cloud

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"'LOOK!' SHE WHISPERED. 'DO YOU SEE?' HE NODDED ASSENT, UNWILLING TO BREAK THE SPELL BY SPEECH."

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break and clear in a widening rift that seemed to open into infinity.

"Look!" she murmured. "*It's coming!* —Look!—*People!*—crowds of them—running and jostling each other! Look, it's a *fête* of some sort—a lot of them have cockades! Do you see?"

In fact, the depths of the crystal were suddenly inhabited. A throng of tiny figures, men and women, surged, broke up, flocked together again in high excitement, arms waving in the air. Over their heads other figures leaned out from the upper windows of a row of more distant houses—evidently the scene was a public square—and waved also in diminutive enthusiasm. Their costumes seemed like fancy dress—men in long, bright-coloured coats with enormous lapels, and tight-fitting trousers with broad stripes of some contrasting colour—women in high-waisted dresses and poke bonnets or no bonnets at all—men and women, and these the greater number, the dominant majority of the crowd, in the nondescript vestments of squalid, ugly poverty. The better-dressed men and women wore prominently, all of them, a cockade or rosette of red, white, and blue.

The crowd, packed close together in a common impulse, was agitated by a common emotion that set a forest of arms waving above their heads and contorted their faces in cries that were inaudible. Something was happening in that square—something that evoked fierce passion—invisible behind the densely-serried mob whose backs alone could be seen.

"Look!" breathed the girl in the chair. "Look!—that poor girl!" There was a curious accent of vivid sympathy in the whispered ejaculation.

A young girl was forcing her way through the throng, her face covered in her hands, her shoulders shaking with sobs, weeping convulsively in a paroxysm of despair. The crowd, intent on the spectacle beyond, parted and made way for her automatically.

"Oh," murmured the girl in the chair, "I feel so funny—I feel I want to cry too—as if a terrible calamity had suddenly come upon me—a frightful danger to someone I loved." She shuddered. "Oh, it's awful! It numbs me—it's—it's as if I felt what *she* was feeling!"

The girl in the vision took her hands from her face, looked about her with eyes of wild misery.

"My God, Helen!" whispered the man in the chair, in a thrill of excitement. "*It's you!*"

'Sh-h!" she breathed, gazing intently into the magic scene. The air about them seemed mysteriously charged with tumultuous passion, with the inaudible vociferations of that surging mob. To both it seemed as though they were in contact with a real crowd, beset by the vague, fierce emotions that gather and roll in the collective, primitive soul of humanity in congregation. It set their hearts to a quicker beat, bewildered their brains with unheard clamours.

The girl in the vision—so strikingly like the girl in the chair that she seemed a duplication of her personality—drew herself erect on the edge of the crowd and wiped her eyes. Evidently, with a great effort, she was mastering herself. The girl in the chair drew a hard breath, as though of some supreme determination. Then, taking a few steps, the figure that they watched moved close under the houses of the nearer side of the square and, looking up at the doorways as though seeking an inscription, commenced to walk along the pavement.

The crystal held her still as its centre—like the lens of a cinematograph following always the chief personage upon the screen—and, watching her, the man and woman in the chair forgot the globe that they held with cataleptic rigidity, forgot the diminished scale of the vision. Their perceptions adjusted themselves like those of children who day-dream among their toys, and it seemed to both of them that they gazed into a real scene, with full-sized human emotions at clash in the acute earnestness of present life.

The girl, her face white and tense, her eyes fixed in the courage of timidity brought to despair, moved along the houses. Suddenly she stopped, looking upwards to a portal surmounted by a trophy of tri-coloured flags and a shield on which the three words, "*Liberté—Egalité—Fraternité*," were crudely emblazoned. A couple of ruffianly men in a quasi-military uniform, exaggeratedly large cocked hats coming down over their ears, short pipes in the mouths hidden by untrimmed, pendent moustaches, enormously long muskets with bayonets fixed leaning against the bandoliers across their chests, guarded the doorway. The girl spoke to them, with vehement gestures, evidently imploring entrance. They barred her path, callously untouched by her agonized entreaty. She pointed up to an inscription below the trophy: "*République Française.—Représentant en Mission*," smiled at them in a heart-breaking assumption of coquetry, candid innocence never more purely virginal. One of them shrugged his shoulders and spat upon the cobbled pavement without removing his pipe. The other winked broadly, and, still retaining his musket, reached out with his disengaged hand. The girl shrank back, horror in her eyes—and then, as if bethinking herself of an unfailing resource, felt feverishly in the neckerchief which covered her bosom. She drew out a packet of notes,

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offered them. With a broad grin on their faces, the two ruffians parted to allow her passage.

She climbed an uncarpeted, dreary staircase, and hesitated for a moment outside a door inscribed: "*Le citoyen réprésentant du peuple Desnouettes.*" She knocked timidly, opened, and entered.

Across a large bare room a young man was seated, writing, at a table. A broad tricoloured sash barred his blue, wide-collared coat and white waistcoat. He had divested himself of the cocked hat with three absurdly large plumes of blue, white, and red, which lay upon the table, and the long hair of his uncovered head reached almost to his shoulders. He looked up, as if startled, at his visitor, looked up with a young face whose intellectual keenness, whose vivid passionate eyes above the long nose and almost ascetic mouth were strangely, disconcertingly reminiscent of—of——

"*Jim!*" gasped the young woman in the chair, feeling herself in that curious state of split identity where the unaffected, remote Ego registers, without controlling, the adventures of a dream.

"'Sh-h!" he murmured in his turn, bewildered to find himself, as it were, looking at his own personality and, though as at the other side of a partition in his soul, experiencing the feelings of the man at whom he gazed. An echo of a surprise, of a mysterious surprise that disturbed him to the depths—of something that had come, startlingly new and powerful, though not yet fully manifest, into his life—reverberated in the recesses of his being as he contemplated the girl. And then a counter-impulse flooded him, the impulse that made him set his mouth, rejecting, with an assertion of his own personality wedded to some vague ideal, the vulgar influence of a human emotion. He felt as though the girl approached *him* as she moved towards that young man who regarded her with a stern frigidity.

"*Citoyenne?*" he was surprised to find himself murmuring the coldly polite query, as though repeating it after that insultingly superior young man.

He heard the gasp of the young woman at his side as of someone infinitely remote from him. His real being was in that large bare room where the superb young Republican scrutinized the young girl with a cold glance that put her out of countenance. Yet how beautiful she was as she blushed up to her eyes, youthful modesty in confusion! He felt something flush warm within his breast, a vague emotion that dissipated the assurance underneath his sternly-maintained aspect. Before she had spoken, an alarm to the threatened supremacy of his cold reason rang through the depths of him. He re-acted with a severity that he obscurely felt to be excessive, reiterated almost with menace, "*Citoyenne?*" Was the word really uttered from his lips? He did not know.

She came close, poured out her trouble in a flood of nervous, anguished speech that he comprehended perfectly without being able to arrest a single definite word in his memory—it was as though that part of him which understood was something deep down, lying beyond the necessity for spoken language. Of course! He comprehended with a kind of awakening memory—that old *emigré* who had stolen back disguised, in defiance of the laws, whom he had arrested for plotting against the safety of that Republic One and Indivisible of which he was the incorruptible servant, whose name he had but just put on the fatal list of the next batch for the guillotine! He chilled, mercilessly, wondered for a moment at his own inexorability, and then, as his identification with the scene completed itself, understood it.

For a crime against himself, against another individual, he might have had compassion. The conspirator against that fanaticized ideal of his soul, the young Republic fighting in rags for its life, for the ultimate freedom of all humanity, was guilty of the unforgivable sin. He steeled himself, in a pride of approximation to that Brutus, to those other sternly-incorruptible Roman Republicans with whom his imagination was filled. No human tears, no human despair, however poignant, should move him from his path of duty. He felt his teeth set hard over the absurd feebleness in his breast as his eyes rested, coldly he hoped, upon that beautiful girl who stood, strangely disturbing in her closeness, and stretched out her arms to him in agonized appeal. As if telepathically, his soul was filled with her passionate, eloquent entreaty—he had to fight down the tears which threatened his eyes in sympathy with those which suffused the beautiful orbs which looked into his, in despair of softening them.

And she—the woman in the chair, remote spheres away, trembled at a trouble in her soul, at an awakening of something else in her—something that was wrong, unpardonably at variance with every standard of her life, as she looked into those stern but fascinating eyes in the ascetic face and pleaded her cause. She despised herself for the blush she felt creep over her. Her father's life—her father's life!—what else dared she think of? This superb young man was an enemy, an implacable enemy, the incarnation of all the crimes wreaked upon her class! Yet his dignity imposed upon her, and she dared not practise that false coquetry upon him that, in a sublime abnegation of her own pride, she had promised herself to use as a

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supreme resource. She could only plead, plead passionately, in utter sincerity, the best in her appealing to the best in him—and she scorned herself for admitting that there was that best to evoke.

A devil stirred in him, subtly malicious, tempting him with an intellectual bait that was the disguise of passions of whose reality he was but vaguely cognizant. These proud *aristos!* The bitterness of a youth of humiliations surged up in him, avid for vengeance. He encouraged it as a protection against himself. He would show them—these oppressors of the people, these enemies of the Republic—who sent their womenfolk to corrupt the virtuous representatives of the nation! Two could play at that game! He smiled in the thought of the insult he prepared.

With a quick movement he rose from his seat, and, on an impulse that was almost blind in its swift fulfilment, put his arm round the girl's waist and kissed her full on the mouth. The act was done before her instinct of self-protection could assert itself—and then she pushed him away in sudden revolt, stood facing him with panting bosom and a countenance where emotions chased each other in alternations of white and red. For a moment she contemplated him, breathing tumultuously, and then, with a gesture of disgust, she wiped her lips. Her eyes looked straight into his with angry dignity, withered him with their fierce disdain. A bitter smile wreathed her lips.

"*Eh bien, citoyen*—you have had your pay. My father's life!"

Did he actually hear the words? The low, scornfully vengeful laugh which came involuntarily from him was like an echo, far off, of that mocking laugh, inaudible now, in the bare room where the young commissary, arrogant with the outrage he had inflicted upon this representative of a superior race, drew himself up in his conscious incorruptibility.

"Your father dies to-morrow, *citoyenne!*" The marble coldness of his voice was a triumph of which he was not sure until it rang in his ears. He exulted in its echo, like a saint self-consciously a victor over temptation.

Their eyes met, looked into each other with a sudden furious, unappeasable hatred—a hatred which flooded them with a passion that was bigger than themselves—that soul-devouring hatred, clutching instinctively at death for its expression, which is the other face of violent love. Between those souls, in commotion far beyond their consciousness, indifference was not possible. They had met, and the world was in upheaval.

He heard the hiss of a long breath drawn in through clenched teeth—he distinguished no longer between the girl like a brooding invisibility in the chair beside him and the panting girl confronting that suddenly pale young patriot whom he watched with inexpressible fascination. He saw the insult, like livid lightning, in her face, before she hurled it at him.

"*Canaille!*"

The word rang close to his ear, and yet infinitely far away, on an accent of vindictive emphasis that struck to his soul.

A fury surged up in him, a blind fury that annihilates with one ruthless blow of its insulted strength.

He stamped a signal on the floor.

"You also, *citoyenne*, will die to-morrow!" The decree, cold as the bloodless lips which uttered it, echoed in him to a savage satisfaction.

The girl remained motionless, head high, in superb indifference to his threat. The door behind her was flung open. The two ruffianly guards ran in, sprang to grip her arms in obedience to his imperious gesture. She smiled at him, splendid in unshakable disdain.

"*We prefer to die!*"

He motioned them out, livid with a rage beyond words. She went, proudly, unresistingly, between her brutal captors. At the door she turned her head and smiled at him again, a smile full of significance.

"*Canaille!*"

He sat down to his table and, in a furious scrawl, added a name to his list. . . .

The vision dissolved in blackness, in an obliteration, for timeless moments, of all thought.

They found themselves looking into a long, dark hall, its gloom inadequately relieved by high barred windows. Straw littered the floor and was collected into little heaps along the walls. Dimly discerned in the shadows was a throng of people, men and women—some promenading up and down in solitary dejection, some in groups seated upon the straw at a game of cards, some leaning propped against the wall in listless despair. He gazed into that Hades-like abode of misery with a curious anxiety at his heart, an anxiety whose cause for the moment eluded him. He watched, waiting in a vague expectation of some event that approached and was yet unseen.

A door in the foreground opened and, with a little intimate shock, he saw enter that mysterious duplication of his personality that was he and yet was not he—the sternly ascetic young *représentant en mission* whose plumed hat and sash of office proclaimed his authority in this dreadful place. A subservient turnkey followed at his heels, called a name.

A young girl—*she*—she of the bare room overlooking the square, she of—of—he failed

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"ON AN IMPULSE THAT WAS ALMOST BLIND IN ITS SWIFT FULFILMENT, HE PUT HIS ARM ROUND THE GIRL'S WAIST AND KISSED HER."

to identify another appearance he knew ought to be familiar—started up from a bed of straw where she had been sitting in company with an old man. She approached, in quiet command of herself, neither hastily nor reluctantly. Obviously, she was indifferent to whatever might be required of her. Only when she perceived the identity of her visitor did she start back in a sudden little hesitation, vanquished as soon as felt. She came coolly up to him, regarded him with contemptuously hostile eyes, awaited his business with her.

He was trembling with emotions that almost overpowered him—the soul that watched felt itself gripped in an agony of remorse, of fear, of—of something else that he would not acknowledge. He stammered evidently as he spoke.

"*Citoyenne*, come with me—you are free!"

She looked at him in blank surprise.

"Free?"

The inaudible words were plain to those two watching souls who had long ago forgotten the crystal that they held. Both thrilled with a sense of crisis in which they were intimately involved.

The young man reiterated his assertion eagerly.

"And my father?" The girl turned her head towards the melancholy figure bowed in dejection on its heap of straw.

He shrugged his shoulders.

"Your father is guilty of a crime against the Republic. I can do nothing for him. But you have committed no crime, *citoyenne*."

Her eyes looked into his, probed him.

"Nor have many here. Why do you release me?"

He lost control of himself in his eagerness

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to withdraw her from the danger into which he had himself so wantonly plunged her.

"Because—because I love you! Because I cannot let you die! Because—I cannot help it—you are all of life to me, *citoyenne!*"

She looked at him, her face like a carven Sphinx, her eyes inscrutable.

"I go—wherever my father goes."

He stood, deathly pale, wrestling with a terrible temptation. She watched his agony, without malice, without sympathy, cold, like a slave in the market who may be bought—for a price. All of him that was human yearned for her, yearned for her unutterably in a surge of desire that all but overcame him—and yet an austere inner self, that self which had vowed itself to the idealized service of the Republic in youthful fanaticism, stood firm although it agonized. He felt himself a worthy spiritual successor of that Scævola who stood with his hand in the fire as he answered, cold sweat upon his brow:—

"*Citoyenne*, it is impossible. I cannot buy even your love with my dishonour. Your father has committed a crime against the Republic—but you have committed none."

She shrugged her shoulders in calm indifference. An insulting smile came into her face.

"Then I will do so!" She turned towards the prisonful of victims with the exultant gesture of a martyr who demands the stake, and cried, evidently with full lungs: "*Vive le Roi! A bas la République!*"

"*Vive le Roi! A bas la République!*" came like a murmured echo from somewhere beyond defined space, in defiant mockery of all that he craved.

He watched her turn away from him, an immense despair submerging him, and went slowly, head down, towards the door as though himself condemned.

She turned for one last look at him as he disappeared, a strange wild ecstasy in her face—and then flung herself face downwards upon the straw in a paroxysm of hysteric sobs.

Whence came those murmured words, charged with unutterable passion, with the intensity of a soul that gathers its essence for its leap into the infinite dark?

"Now—now I can love him! Death, death, come quickly!—now I have the right to love!"

There was a glimpse of a face suddenly radiant through its tears—and then again blackness, a suspense of thought.

He stood with his back to the room, looking out upon the square filled with a surging mob. In the middle, upon a raised scaffold, stood the terrible red-painted uprights with the gleaming knife under the linking beam, poised ready for the swift fall of its diagonal edge. The mob swirled in a sudden turbulence under the windows. He knew what it meant.

There, forcing its slow passage through the maddened crowd, came the fatal cart—a rough vehicle filled with hatless men and women whose necks were bare and whose hands were bound, men and women who seemed deaf to the vociferations of the bloodthirsty mob that raved about them. He shuddered—slipped his right hand into his pocket, held it there, his gaze fastened in horrible fascination upon that slowly moving cartload of already almost lifeless human beings. He saw, clearly, only one figure, a girl in white, and he waited—in an agony which held him rigid.

The cart lurched its slow way to the scaffold, stopped. The victims began to descend. He saw the figure in white mount the steps to the machine, saw it turn its head at that last moment towards his window—and, as though it were the signal expected, he whipped the pistol from his pocket, glimpsed the dark hole of its barrel, and fired.

The man and woman in the chair stared into a crystal ball whose depths were suffused with a milky cloud.

"Oh, Jim!" she murmured. "*The last time——!*"

"'Sh-h!" he said, with a squeeze of her hand. "Look! It's coming again!"

Once more the cloud parted—they peered, breath held for further revelations, into a crude contrast of bright light and intense shadow, upon a striped awning at an angle from a wall glaring in the sun, upon a narrow street where dust rose yellow, like an illumined cloud above a dark throng of Asiatics, their white robes almost blue in the shadow, who gesticulated and pushed each other as they packed themselves into a semicircle of eager faces. Their vision adjusting itself to the violent juxtaposition of high light and deep shadow, they stared into the comparative sombreness under the awning, to the object which held the interest of the crowd.

In a cleared space, in front of a trio of barbaric musicians a dancing-girl postured in fluidic attitudes of her lithe, slim body. Arms and legs covered with bracelets, she turned, stretched and twisted herself in accompaniment to a rhythm which escaped them. Indefatigably she danced, heedless of the eager, appreciative eyes upon her, her face expressionless in a rapt absorption where consciousness of her environment seemed lost. The crowd shouted inaudible encouragements in flashes of gleaming teeth, flung flowers and small coins on to the mat whereon she danced, swayed with contagious waves of enthusiasm. The girl danced on, indifferent to their applause, ecstatically absorbed in the perfection of her art.

Suddenly there was a commotion in the

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rear of the crowd, a jostling and elbowing which propagated itself to the front rank. The throng parted, with alarmed turns of the head to some disturbance behind them. A huge elephant appeared, gliding forward with slow and stately motion to the rhythmic wave of its sensitive trunk. Upon the gorgeous cloth of its back was poised a richly carved and gilt *howdah* surmounted by a gigantic umbrella in scarlet and gold. Beneath that umbrella reposed a languid young man, handsome, with aquiline nose and splendid eyes under the magnificent turban which crowned his dark head. He lifted his hand in a gesture to the *mahout* perched on the neck of the elephant, and the great animal stopped, left in a clear space by the crowd, which fell back reverently from its neighbourhood.

Still the girl danced on, heedless, unperceiving perhaps, of the prince who watched her from his lofty seat. The musicians, after one quick upward glance of apprehension, risked boldly and played on with undisturbed solemnity. She danced with a sinuous grace that held the eye in fascination, with an intensity of restrained movement, daringly provocative though were her postures, which thrilled the watcher with a sense of suppressed and concentrated passion whose potentialities might not be measured. She danced, the incarnation of the fierce pulse of life that beats beneath the fallacious languor of the East, her body charged with vitality as it bent and straightened with lithe precision to another curve, her face carven, expressionless, as though her soul were withdrawn to its mysterious centre. The prince clapped his hands in irrepressible enthusiasm. She stopped dead, stood rigidly upright facing him, arms close to her sides, arabesqued breastlets thrust forward, a slim statue that quivered with magically arrested life, in a motionless effrontery that challenged his regard, his very power. Their eyes met, looked into each other while the musicians ceased to play. What was that of intense communion which sped between them? With a sudden gesture the prince flung a handful of golden coins into the mat, made a grave inclination of his head.

The elephant moved onward. With a smile of triumph, with a breath long-drawn through her nostrils, and eyes that closed ecstatically for a moment as in a dream realized, the girl followed in the train of his gorgeously-attired retinue.

They knew—those watchers who gazed as through the rent veils of eternity, apprehending with minds that had ceased to be corporeal—recognizing themselves once more, though in an incarnation immeasurably remote, an incarnation whose transient language was long ago forgotten.

The vision changed abruptly. They gazed into the hall of an Oriental palace, arabesqued arches in a colonnade on either side, tessellated marble in cool colours patterning the floor, ebony-black slaves waving peacock fans above a cushioned divan on which the prince reclined. An indulgent smile played over his handsome features as he toyed with the unbraided hair of the beautiful girl who sat at his feet, in confident lassitude against his knee, and turned her head back to gaze up into his face with eyes voluptuously fond. She sighed with happiness—her face no longer expressionless as in the public dance, but charged with a yearning intensity of love. He, too, yearned over her with his grave smile, bent his head down for the kiss her lips put up to him.

Again the scene changed. It was night in the colonnaded hall. A shadow moved out of the darkness, stood in the moonlight, waited for a moment, then dropped a veil from its face. It was the dancing-girl. She turned questing eyes about her as though, at risk to herself, she was fulfilling an appointment that was not yet met.

Another shadow slid out of the gloom under the arches, approached her—another woman, young also and also beautiful, but with a beauty—its character was startlingly vivid to those watchers—that was insinuatingly treacherous, the beauty that smiles as it betrays. She stood now with the erstwhile dancing-girl in the moonlight, spoke to her with an assumption of gravely concerned and pitying friendship, shook her head dolefully as though in distress at her own message. The dancing-girl revolted with a vehement gesture of denial, of impossibility—but her dark eyes flashed and her nostrils quivered. The other persisted, in emphatic asseveration, her face a study in subtle malice. She pointed to the heavy curtains which draped the just-seen extremity of the hall, a fiercely assertive significance in her gesture.

The girl shrank back, shuddered. Then, with a slow turn of her body from the tempter, she relapsed into herself, into a fierce meditation where her eyes swept the shadows about her, where her lips uncovered her teeth in a quick-caught breath and her clenched fist went slowly, tensely, up to the side of her head in an agony that was beyond words. The other woman contemplated her, just restraining a smile, diabolically malicious—appealed once more to those hanging curtains for proof of her sincerity. The girl, forlorn, gripped in some immense unhappiness, nodded sombrely, with set teeth. With one last unobserved smile of evil triumph, the other woman vanished.

For a long moment the girl hesitated. Then, with a stealthy, feline step, her shoulders crouched, she commenced to move along

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"CHEERIO!

I'M ARCHIE!"

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incarnations, met and reacted in wild passions that claimed them fully. In the eternal history of their lives all was possible, all had happened, every variation of experience—save only indifference to each other. An unseen link held them always, tightened into contact from the moment of propinquity. On islands in a blue sea furrowed by long-oared and primitive galleys; in cities of Cyclopean masonry that glittered, as if vitrified, in a burning sun; in dark forests where skin-clad savages went furtively with stone-barbed spears and knelt in worship of the animal that they had just slain; by the side of reedy lakes where hairy, scarce-human creatures crouched and gnawed the bones they plucked from the embers—always they two met and always they were lovers, fortunate sometimes, tragic sometimes, but always lovers.

Beyond humanity, far into the mists of time where strange shapes bodied themselves unrecognizable, and were dissipated into others yet more strange, the visions continued in ever-increasing recession—leading back into a distance where they lost all sense of personal participation among vague and formless shadows.

They watched, in a breathless fascination.

Still farther back, beyond those shadows, something began to glow in the depths of a night that cleared to transparent blackness, a ball of fire, of living light that pulsed with intense incandescence in an uttermost remoteness. And, as they watched, it divided itself, split into two smaller spheres that circled about each other, throwing out flames that reached like clutching arms in vain endeavour to re-establish unity. For an incomputable period—it seemed æons to those souls who watched—they circled, held in mutual attraction and yet still apart despite the reaching streamers. And then slowly, slowly, they approached—their light heightening to a yet more vivid brightness as they drew near.

The crystal globe slipped from numbed fingers into the fireplace. As though roused from a dream by the crash of its contact with the brass curb, the girl started and turned to her companion. He picked up the crystal, starred and fissured with its fall—henceforth useless.

"Oh, Jim!" she cried, in poignant regret. "We shall not see—— What is going to happen *this* time?"

She held his hand between her two, gazed up into his face in fond anxiety, yearned out to him.

He put down the crystal, drew her close, enfolded her.

"Love!" he answered. "Love—once more and for always! And, to us, dear, nothing else matters. It is the one reality."

In each other's eyes they saw, with a perception transcending physical vision, the divine light of those sundered spheres that drew together.

ACROSTICS.

WITH Acrostic No. 79, printed below, our fourteenth series of six acrostics begins. The competition is open to all readers of THE STRAND MAGAZINE, and prizes to the value of twelve guineas will be awarded to the most successful solvers.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 79.

A CITY where
There may be seen
A thoroughfare
And magazine.

1. Of ancient Rome
Macaulay wrote.
2. When not at home,
Three letters note.
3. Take six, or eight,
Or less, or more.
4. A goddess great
In days of yore.
5. A giant, in
The starry skies.
6. Reverse, and din
Will meet your eyes. PAX.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 80.

WITH dairy produce found on either side,
Food for our homes is easily supplied.

1. A little bed, a useful book to read.
2. Three-quarters of an hour is all we need.
3. Twice two we take, and then the same again.
4. The duty of an editor is plain.
5. Pebble or rock, some fourteen pounds it weighs.
6. A berry which some sign of age displays. PAX.

Answers to Acrostics Nos. 79 and 80 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on April 9th.

The solution to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper, and both must be signed with the solver's pseudonym. Two answers are permitted for each light.

ANSWER TO No. 78.

1.	C	ivi	L
2.	H	iepisc	O
3.	A	ddiso	N
4.	R	affle	D
5.	I	ndig	O
6.	N	icomachea	N
7.	G	a	B
8.	C	ashie	R
9.	R	anjitsinhj	I
10.	O	be	D
11.	S	pankin	G
12.	S	hir	E

NOTES.—Light 1. Roman figures. 2. Archiepiscopate, the province of an archbishop; pate, head; arc, a curve. 3. Clio, one of the muses. Addison signed his papers C, L, I, or O. 4. Raff led. 5. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet, the colours of the spectrum. 6. Latin, *Hic est*, here is; ethics. The Nicomachean ethics. 8. French, *cas, hier*; to cashier, dismiss. 9. The Jam of Nawanagar. Or, Ranji. 10. Naomi and Ruth. 11. Span, king. 12. A shire, the river Shire; heirs succeed under a will.

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"CHEERIO!

I'M ARCHIE!"

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ARCHIE and the SAUSAGE CHAPPIE

by

P. G. WODEHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED BY
A. WALLIS MILLS

THE morning was fair, the sky was blue, and the sun shone genially upon New York as Archie Moffam, arm-in-arm with his young friend, Reginald van Tuyl, sauntered into Broadway. For the first time since he had married Lucille, the only daughter of Daniel Brewster, millionaire proprietor of the Cosmopolis Hotel, things had begun to break right for Archie. Relations between himself and his father-in-law had at last been placed upon a satisfactory footing.

"The relief, dear old bean," he said to Reggie, "is something terrific. It seems that old Brewster—a fellow who absolutely has to be seen to be believed—had hoped for a different sort of son-in-law, and I am revealing no secrets when I say that, on my rolling in and trying to dig a father's blessing out of him, he nearly expired on the door-mat. True, he put me up at the Cosmopolis and let me sign for my meals, but apart from that he was far from matey—very, very far! Oh, far indeed! However, just as I was getting fed to the gills with my sufferings and beginning to crack under the strain, I'm dashed if there wasn't a happy ending. Absolutely! A regular 'close-up' and slow 'fade-out' of Virtue Triumphant. You see, the old boy is most fearfully keen on building another hotel, and he'd got the site and what not, when he suddenly discovered that one of the waiters he'd sacked from the Cosmopolis—great pal of mine—owned a shop in the very middle of it and wouldn't sell. I offered to intercede, bit his ear for three thousand of the best and crispest to buy the shop, bought it, and then told him that *I* wouldn't sell unless he chucked his imitation of Simon Legree and became matey. So now everything's fine. The Dove of Peace flaps its little wings—— Halloa! old lad, what's the matter?"

Archie broke off his recital abruptly. A sort of spasm had passed across his companion's features. The hand holding Archie's arm had tightened convulsively. One would have said that Reginald had received a shock.

"It's nothing," said Reggie. 'I'm all right now. I caught sight of that fellow's clothes rather suddenly. They shook me a bit. I'm all right now," he said, bravely.

Archie followed his friend's gaze, and understood. Reggie van Tuyl was never at his strongest in the morning, and he had a sensitive eye for clothes. He had been known to resign from clubs because members exceeded the bounds in the matter of soft shirts with dinner-jackets. And the short, thick-set man who was standing just in front of them in an attitude of restful immobility was certainly no dandy. His best friend could not have called him dapper. Take him for all in all and on the hoof, he might have been posing as a model for a

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sketch of What the Well-Dressed Man Should Not Wear.

In costume, as in most other things, it is best to take a definite line and stick to it. This man had obviously vacillated. His neck was swathed in a green scarf; he wore an evening-dress coat; and his lower limbs were draped in a pair of tweed trousers built for a larger man. To the north he was bounded by a straw hat, to the south by brown shoes.

Archie surveyed the man's back carefully.

'Bit thick!" he said, sympathetically. "But of course Broadway isn't Fifth Avenue. What I mean to say is, Bohemian licence and what not. Broadway's crammed with deuced brainy devils who don't care how they look. Probably this bird is a master-mind of some species, strayed from Greenwich Village."

"All the same, man's no right to wear evening-dress coat with tweed trousers."

"Absolutely not! I see what you mean."

At this point the sartorial offender turned. Seen from the front, he was even more unnerving. He appeared to possess no shirt, though this defect was offset by the fact that the tweed trousers fitted snugly under the arms. He was not a handsome man. At his best he could never have been that, and in the recent past he had managed to acquire a scar that ran from the corner of his mouth half-way across his cheek. Even when his face was in repose he had an odd expression; and when, as he chanced to do now, he smiled, odd became a mild adjective, quite inadequate for purposes of description. It was not an unpleasant face, however. Unquestionably genial, indeed. There was something in it that had a quality of humorous appeal.

Archie started. He stared at the man. Memory stirred.

"Great Scot!" he cried. "It's the Sausage Chappie!"

Reginald van Tuyl gave a little moan. He was not used to this sort of thing. A sensitive young man as regarded scenes, Archie's behaviour unmanned him. For Archie, releasing his arm, had bounded forward and was shaking the other's hand warmly.

"Well, well, well! My dear old chap! You must remember me, what? No? Yes?"

The man with the scar seemed puzzled. He shuffled the brown shoes, patted the straw hat, and eyed Archie questioningly.

"I don't seem to place you," he said.

Archie slapped the back of the evening-dress coat. He linked his arm affectionately with that of the dress-reformer.

"We met outside St. Mihiel in the war. You gave me a bit of sausage! One of the most sporting events in history. Nobody



"REGINALD GAVE A LITTLE MOAN—

but a real sportsman would have parted with a bit of sausage at that moment to a stranger. Never forgotten it, by Jove! Saved my life, absolutely! Hadn't chewed a morsel for eight hours! Well, have you got anything on? I mean to say, you aren't booked for lunch or any rot of that species, are you? Fine! Then I move we all toddle off and get a bite somewhere." He squeezed the other's arm fondly. "Fancy meeting you again like this! I've often wondered what became of you. But, by Jove! I was forgetting. Dashed rude of me! My friend, Mr. Van Tuyl."

Reggie gulped. The longer he looked at it, the harder this man's costume was to bear. His eye passed shudderingly from the brown shoes to the tweed trousers, to the green scarf, from the green scarf to the straw hat.

'Sorry," he mumbled. "Just remembered. Important date. Late already. Er—see you some time——"

He melted away, a broken man. Archie was not sorry to see him go. Reggie was a good chap, but he would undoubtedly have been *de trop* at this reunion.

'I vote we go to the Cosmopolis," he said, steering his newly-found friend through the crowd. 'The browsing and sluicing isn't bad there, and I can sign the bill, which is no small consideration nowadays."

The Sausage Chappie chuckled amusedly.

'I can't go to a place like the Cosmopolis looking like this."

Archie was a little embarrassed.

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—ARCHIE'S BEHAVIOUR UNMANNED HIM. 'WELL, WELL, WELL! MY DEAR OLD CHAP! YOU MUST REMEMBER ME, WHAT? NO? YES?'"

"Oh, I don't know, you know, don't you know!" he said. "Still, since you have brought the topic up in the course of general chit-chat, you *did* get the good old wardrobe a bit mixed this morning, what? I mean to say, you seem absent-mindedly, as it were, to have got hold of samples from a good number of your various suitings."

"Suitings? How do you mean, suitings? I haven't any suitings! Who do you think I am? Vincent Astor? All I have is what I stand up in."

Archie was shocked. This tragedy touched him. He himself had never had any money in his life, but somehow he had always seemed to manage to have plenty of clothes. How this was he could not say. He had always had a vague sort of idea that tailors were kindly birds who never failed to have a pair of trousers or something up their sleeve to present to the deserving. There was the drawback, of course, that, once they had given you the things, they were apt to write you rather a lot of letters about it; but you soon managed to recognize their handwriting, and then it was a simple task to extract their communications from your morning mail and drop them in the waste-paper basket. This was the first case he had encountered of a man who was really short of clothes.

"My dear old lad," he said, briskly, "this must be remedied! Oh, positively! This must be remedied at once! I suppose my things wouldn't fit you? No. Well, I tell you what. We'll wangle something from my father-in-law. Old Brewster, you know, the fellow who runs the Cosmopolis. His'll fit you like the paper on the wall, because he's a tubby little blighter, too. What I mean to say is, he's also one of those sturdy, square, fine-looking chappies of about the middle height."

"I gather," said the man with the scar, "that you have a pull with your father-in-law?"

"Absolutely! Quite the spoiled child and what not! By the way, where are you stopping these days?"

"Nowhere just at present. I thought of taking one of those self-contained Park benches."

"Are you broke?"

"Am I!"

Archie was concerned.

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"You ought to get a job."

"I ought. But somehow I don't seem able to."

"What did you do before the war?"

"I've forgotten."

"Forgotten!"

"Forgotten."

"How do you mean—forgotten? You can't mean—*forgotten?*"

"Yes. It's quite gone."

"But I mean to say! You can't have forgotten a thing like that!"

"Can't I! I've forgotten all sorts of things. Where I was born. How old I am. Whether I'm married or single. What my name is——"

"Well, I'm dashed!" said Archie, staggered. "But you remembered about giving me a bit of sausage outside St. Mihiel?"

"No, I didn't. I'm taking your word for it. For all I know you may be luring me into some den to rob me of my straw hat. I don't know you from Adam! But I like your conversation—especially the part about eating—and I'm taking a chance!"

Archie was concerned.

"Listen, old bean! Make an effort! You must remember that sausage episode! It was just outside St. Mihiel, about five in the evening. Your little lot were lying next to my little lot, and we happened to meet, and I said 'What ho!' and you said 'Halloa!' and I said 'What ho! What ho!' and you said 'Have a bit of sausage?' and I said 'What ho! What ho! What *ho!*'"

"The dialogue seems to have been darned sparkling, but I don't remember it. It must have been after that that I stopped one. I don't seem quite to have caught up with myself since I got hit."

"Oh! That's how you got that scar?"

"No. I got that jumping through a plate-glass window in London on Armistice night."

"What on earth did you do that for?"

"Oh, I don't know. It seemed a good idea at the time."

"But if you can remember a thing like that, why can't you remember your name?"

"I remember everything that happened after I came out of hospital. It's the part before that's gone."

Archie patted him on the shoulder.

"I know just what you want. You need a bit of quiet and repose, to think things over and so forth. You mustn't go sleeping on Park benches. Won't do at all! Not a bit like it! You must shift to the Cosmopolis. It isn't half a bad spot, the old Cosmop. I didn't like it much the first night I was there, because there was a dashed tap that went drip-drip-drip all night and kept me awake, but the place has its points."

"Is the Cosmopolis giving free board and lodging these days?"

"Rather! Take it from me! I've had some! That'll be all right. My father-in-law's frightfully keen on me. Refuse me nothing! Well, this is the spot. We'll start by trickling up to the old boy's suite and looking over his reach-me-downs. I know the waiter on his floor. A very sound chappie. He'll let us in with his pass-key."

And so it came about that Mr. Daniel Brewster, returning to his suite in the middle of lunch in order to find a paper dealing with the subject he was discussing with his guest, the architect of his new hotel, was aware of a murmur of voices behind the closed door of his bedroom. Recognizing the accents of his son-in-law, he breathed an oath and charged in. He objected to Archie wandering at large about his suite.

The sight that met his eyes when he opened the door did nothing to soothe him. The floor was a sea of clothes. There were coats on the chairs, trousers on the bed, shirts on the bookshelf. And in the middle of this welter stood Archie, with a man who, to Mr. Brewster's heated eye, looked like a tramp comedian out of a burlesque show.

"Great Godfrey!" ejaculated Mr. Brewster.

Archie looked up with a friendly smile.

"Oh, halloa-halloa!" he said, affably. "We were just glancing through your spare scenery to see if we couldn't find something for my pal here. This is Mr. Brewster, my father-in-law, old man."

Archie scanned his relative's twisted features. Something in his expression seemed not altogether encouraging. He decided that the negotiations had better be conducted in private. "One moment, old lad," he said to his new friend. "I just want to have a little talk with my father-in-law in the other room. Just a little friendly business chat. You stay here."

In the other room Mr. Brewster turned on Archie like a wounded lion of the desert.

"What the——!"

Archie secured one of his coat-buttons and began to massage it affectionately.

"Ought to have explained!" said Archie, "only didn't want to interrupt your lunch. The sportsman on the horizon is a dear old pal of mine——"

Mr. Brewster wrenched himself free.

"What the devil do you mean, you worm, by bringing tramps into my bedroom and messing about with my clothes?"

"That's just what I'm trying to explain, if you'll only listen. This bird is a bird I met in France during the war. He gave me a bit of sausage outside St. Mihiel——"

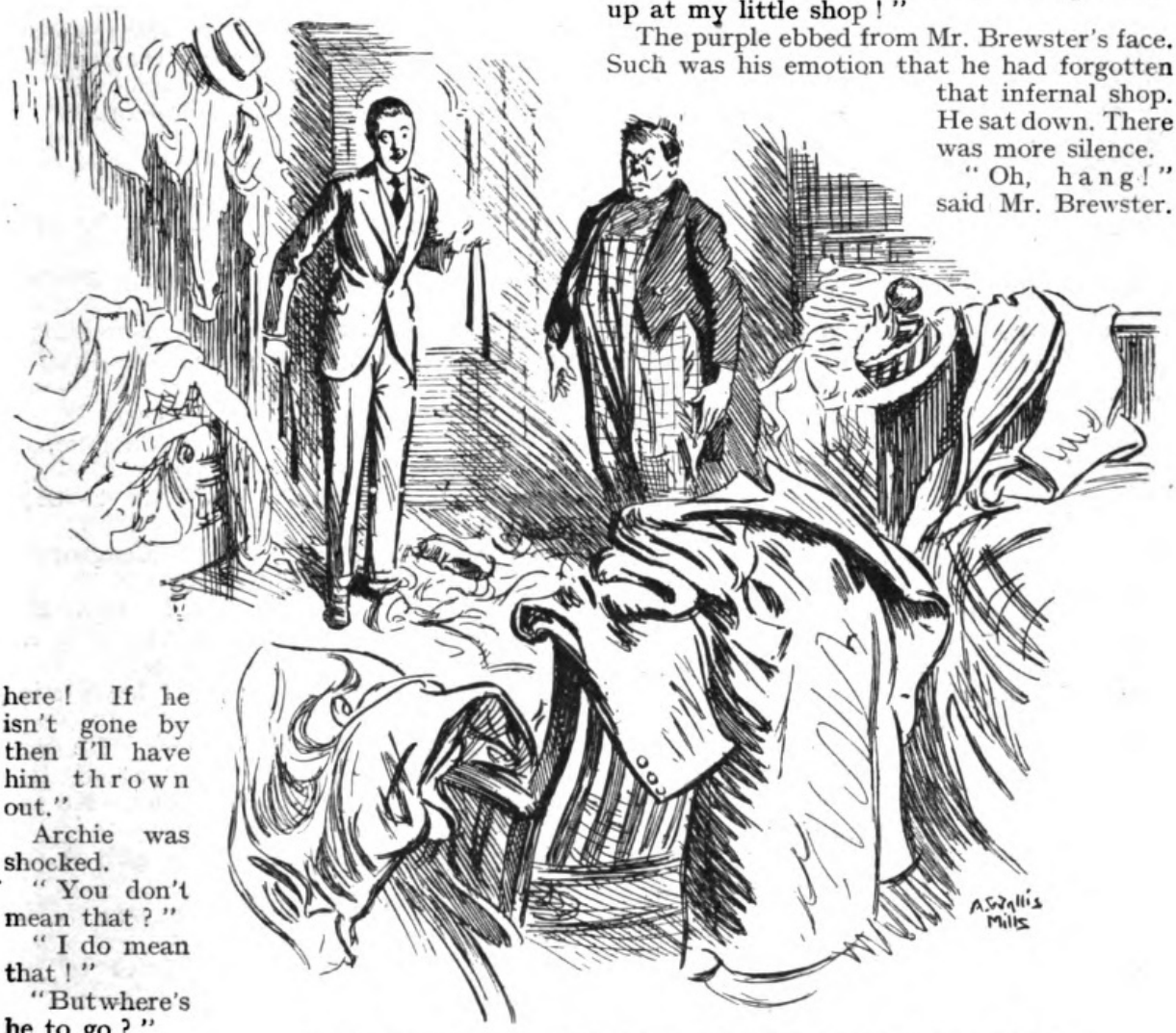
"Damn you and him and the sausage!"

"Absolutely! But listen! He can't

remember who he is or where he was born or what his name is, and he's broke; so, dash it! I must look after him. You see, he gave me a bit of sausage!"

Mr. Brewster's frenzy gave way to an ominous calm.

"I'll give him two seconds to clear out of here! If he isn't gone by then I'll have him thrown out."



"THE SIGHT THAT MET HIS EYES WHEN HE OPENED THE DOOR DID NOTHING TO SOOTHE HIM."

Archie was shocked.

"You don't mean that?"

"I do mean that!"

"But where's he to go?"

"Outside."

"But you don't understand. You haven't grasped the good old situash! This chappie has lost his memory because he was wounded in the war. Keep that fact firmly fixed in the old bean! He fought for you! Fought and bled for you! Bled profusely, by Jove! *And* he saved my life!"

"If I'd got nothing else against him, that would be enough!"

"But you can't sling a chappie out into the cold hard world who bled in gallons to make the world safe for the Hotel Cosmopolis! Think of all he went through! What did *you* do in the Great War, daddy? Eh? What, what, what?"

Mr. Brewster looked ostentatiously at his watch.

"Two seconds!" he said.

There was a silence. Archie appeared to be thinking.

"Right ho!" he said at last. "No need to get the wind up! I know where he can go. It's just occurred to me. I'll put him up at my little shop!"

The purple ebbed from Mr. Brewster's face. Such was his emotion that he had forgotten that infernal shop. He sat down. There was more silence.

"Oh, hang!" said Mr. Brewster.

"I knew you would be reasonable about it," said Archie, approvingly. "Now, honestly, as man to man, how do we go?"

"What do you want me to do?" growled Mr. Brewster.

"I thought you might put the chappie up for a while, and give him a chance to look round and nose about a bit."

"I absolutely refuse to give any more loafers free board and lodging."

"Any *more*?"

"Well, he would be the second, wouldn't he?"

Archie looked pained.

"It's true," he said, "that when I first

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came here I was temporarily resting, so to speak; but didn't I go right out and grab the managership of your new hotel? Positively!"

"I will *not* adopt this tramp."

"Well, find him a job, then."

"What sort of a job?"

"Oh, any old sort."

"He can be a waiter if he likes."

"But I say, you know," said Archie, doubtfully, "this chappie is a gentleman, you know."

"Oh, indeed! Then perhaps he would rather be manager of the hotel?"

"That's a sound idea! I'll ask him."

Mr. Brewster exploded.

"Listen! I'll give your dilapidated friend two seconds to decide if he wants to be a waiter or not. If he doesn't, he knows the way out!"

"That 'two seconds' thing seems to be a perfect obsession with you. All right; I'll put the matter before him."

He returned to the bedroom. The Sausage Chappie was gazing fondly into the mirror with a spotted tie draped round his neck.

"I say, old top," said Archie, apologetically, "the Emperor of the Blighters out yonder isn't in one of his sunniest moods to-day. Don't know why! He has delivered what you might call a jolly old ultimatum. He says you can have a job here as waiter, and he won't do another dashed thing for you. How about it?"

"Do waiters eat?"

"I suppose so. Though, by Jove, come to think of it, I've never seen one at it."

"That's good enough for me!" said the Sausage Chappie. "When do I begin?"

The Sausage Chappie made rather a good waiter. He was brisk and attentive, and did the work as if he liked it. But Archie, brooding on his case, was not satisfied. Something seemed to tell him that the man was fitted for higher things; and as the days went by, it began to seem to him that it was he, Archie Moffam, who had been selected by Destiny to find the other's real place in the sun. Archie was a grateful soul. That sausage, coming at the end of a five-hour hike, had made a deep impression on his plastic nature. Reason told him that only an exceptional man could have parted with half a sausage at a moment when half sausages were worth considerably more than their weight in gold; and he could not feel that a job as waiter at a New York hotel was an adequate job for an exceptional man. Of course, the root of the trouble lay in the fact that the fellow couldn't remember what his real life-work had been before the war. It was exasperating to reflect, as the other moved away from his table to take his order to the kitchen, that there—for all one knew—went the dickens of a lawyer or doctor or architect or what not, debarred from the exercise of his legitimate profession by the mere accident of having received a section of a German shell in the side of his head. The thing kept Archie awake at night.

One night, when he was not awake—it was, as a matter of fact, four o'clock in the morning—he was jerked from sleep by the ringing of the telephone-bell. He drowsily unhooked the receiver. The voice of the Sausage Chappie sounded at the other end of the wire.

"Halloa! Is that you?"

"Absolutely!" said Archie.

"It's a trifle late," said the Sausage Chappie.

"No, no!" said Archie, courteously. "Any time you're passing!"

"I wanted to tell you I've just remembered something. I was born in—half a minute, I've forgotten again!"

Archie held the receiver patiently.

"Halloa!" said the Sausage Chappie.

"On the spot!" said Archie.

"Springfield, Ohio," said the Sausage Chappie.

"I say, that's fine, what! Congratulations, old top! Anything else?"

"Nothing at present. But I feel as if a sort of mist were beginning to lift. I'm expecting further dope any minute."

"Splendid! Stick to it, old bean, stick to it!"

Archie hung up the receiver. He was thrilled. He wanted to chat about this extraordinary affair with someone. He unhooked the receiver again.

"Number, please," said the girl at the switchboard.

"I say, will you put me through to Mr. Brewster's room?"

Presently the sleep-laden voice of his father-in-law greeted him.

"Halloa!"

"Oh, halloa!" said Archie. "Is that you? I say, isn't it topping? You know our pal with the groggy memory—the one you lent your blue suit to? Well——"

"What the devil are you talking about?"

"I'm just telling you. You remember the bird you gave the waiter job to? The Sausage Chappie, you know. Well, he's just remembered he was born in Springfield, Ohio!"

There was a long pause at the other end of the wire.

"Did you get me out of bed at four in the morning," said Mr. Brewster, in a strained voice, "to tell me that?"

"I thought you would be glad to know."

Mr. Brewster hung up the receiver without a word. There were no words, in or out of

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the dictionary, which would have even begun to express his feelings. He might have done it in Russian, but he knew no Russian. He was not interested in the Sausage Chappie's birth-place. He was, indeed, sorry the Sausage Chappie had been born at all. And he was still sorrier that Archie Moffam had been born. He had long since come to look on that event as one of the worst calamities the world had ever seen.

Something of this view-point he expressed to Archie by word of mouth in the lobby of the hotel next morning, when he met the latter on his way to lunch in the grill-room. And it was in a somewhat subdued mood that Archie finally extracted himself from the machinery and passed on. Although Mr. Brewster was bitterly conscious throughout the interview that he was doing nothing like justice to his subject, he did once or twice achieve real eloquence, and Archie was glad to withdraw. He sank down in his favourite corner in a frame of mind comparable to that of one who has been kicked on the head by a mule and run over by a motor-truck.

The grill-room had begun to fill up. The Sausage Chappie was attending to a table farther down the room, at which a woman with a small boy in a sailor suit had seated themselves. The woman was engrossed with the bill of fare, but the child's attention seemed riveted upon the Sausage Chappie. He was drinking him in with wide eyes.

'Mummie," he asked, interestedly, as the latter disappeared towards the kitchen, "why has that man got such a funny face?"

"Hush, darling!"

"Yes, but why *has* he?"

"I don't know, darling."

The child's faith in the maternal omniscience seemed to have received a shock. He had the air of a seeker after truth who has been baffled. His eyes roamed the room discontentedly.

"He's got a funnier face than that man there," he said, pointing at Archie.

"Hush, darling!"

'But he has! Much funnier!"

In a way it was a sort of compliment, but Archie felt embarrassed. He buried himself behind the bill of fare. Presently the Sausage Chappie returned, attended to the needs of the woman and the child, and came over to Archie. Archie ordered a chop. The Sausage Chappie booked the item, added French fried potatoes on his own responsibility, and then, dismissing business for the moment, became communicative.

"I had a big night last night," he said, leaning on the table.

"That's good," said Archie. "The old bean beginning to stir a bit, what?"

"I should say so! Something seems to have happened to the works. Just before I went to sleep I remembered my name as well."

Archie forgot his troubles in his excitement.

"I say, that's topping! What is your name?"

"Why, it's—— That's funny! It's gone again. I have an idea it began with an S. What was it? Skeffington? Skillington?"

"Sanderson?"

"No; I'll get it in a moment. Cunningham? Carrington? Wilberforce? Debenham?"

"Dennison?" suggested Archie, helpfully.

"No, no, no. It's on the tip of my tongue. Barrington? Montgomery? Hepplethwaite? I've got it! Smith!"

"By Jove! Really?"

"Certain of it."

"What's the first name?"

An anxious expression came into the man's eyes. He hesitated. He lowered his voice.

"I have a horrible feeling that it's Lancelot!"

"Good God!" said Archie.

"It couldn't really be that, could it?"

Archie looked grave. He hated to give pain, but he felt he must be honest.

"It might!" he said. "People give their children all sorts of rummy names. My second name's Tracy! And I have a pal in England who was christened Cuthbert de la Hay Horace. Fortunately everyone calls him Stinker."

The head-waiter began to drift up like a bank of fog, and the Sausage Chappie returned to his professional duties. When he came back, bearing the chop and potatoes, he was beaming again.

"Something else I remembered," he said, removing the cover. "I'm married!"

"Good Lord!"

"At least I was before the war. She had blue eyes and brown hair and a Pekingese dog."

"What was her name?"

"I don't know."

"Well, you're coming on," said Archie. "I'll admit that! You've still got a bit of a way to go before you become like one of those blighters who take the Memory Training Courses in the magazine advertisements—I mean to say, you know, the lads who meet a fellow once for five minutes, and then come across him again ten years later and grasp him by the hand and say, 'Surely this is Mr. Watkins of Seattle?' Still, you're doing fine. You only need patience. Everything comes to him who waits." Archie sat up, electrified. "I say, by Jove, that's rather good, what! Everything comes to him who waits, and you're a waiter, what, what! I mean to say, what!"

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"'GOOD LORD!' SAID THE SAUSAGE CHAPPIE. 'WHO'S THAT? OVER AT THE TABLE THERE?'"

"Mummie," said the child at the other table, still speculative, "do you think something trod on his face?"

"Hush, darling!"

"Perhaps it was bitten by something?"

"Eat your nice fish, darling," said the mother, who seemed to be one of those dull-witted persons whom it is impossible to interest in a discussion on first causes.

Archie attacked his chop vigorously. He felt stimulated. Not even the advent of his father-in-law, who came in a few moments later and sat down at the other end of the room, could depress his spirits. He champed his chop with an appetite, and nodded cheerily to the lunchers as they arrived.

The Sausage Chappie came to his table again.

"It's a funny thing," he said. "Like waking up after you've been asleep. Everything seems to be getting clearer. The dog's name was Marie. My wife's dog, you know. And she had a mole on her chin."

"The dog?"

"No. My wife. Little beast! She bit me in the leg once."

"Your wife?"

"No. The dog."

Archie scanned the bill of fare.

"How about a chunk of French pastry and a demi-tasse?" he said. "Yes, I rather think that's what the doctor ordered."

"Good Lord!" said the Sausage Chappie.

Archie looked up. The exclamation could hardly be intended for a commentary on his choice of provender, for the other, who always took a kindly and constructive interest in his meals, had himself suggested a bit of French pastry when bringing the chop. Some deeper emotion than disapproval was plainly working within him. Archie followed his gaze.

A couple of tables away, next to a sideboard on which the management exposed for view the cold meats and puddings and pies mentioned in volume two of the bill of fare ("Buffet Froid"), a man and a girl had just seated themselves. The man was stout and middle-aged. He bulged in practically every place in which a man can bulge, and his head was almost entirely free from hair. The girl was young and pretty. Her eyes were blue. Her hair was brown. She had a rather attractive little mole on the left side of her chin.

"Good Lord!" said the Sausage Chappie.

"Now what?" said Archie.

"Who's that? Over at the table there?"

Archie, through long attendance at the Cosmopolis Grill, knew most of the *habitués* by sight.

"That's a man named Gossett. James J. Gossett. He's a motion-picture man. You must have seen his name around."

"I don't mean him. Who's the girl?"

"I've never seen her before."

"It's my wife!" said the Sausage Chappie.

"Your wife!"

"Yes!"

"Are you sure?"

"Of course I'm sure!"

"Well, well, well!" said Archie. "Many happy returns of the day!"

At the other table, the girl, unconscious of

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the drama which was about to enter her life, was engrossed in conversation with the stout man. And at this moment the stout man leaned forward and patted her on the cheek.

It was a paternal pat, the pat which a genial uncle might bestow on a favourite niece, but it did not strike the Sausage Chappie in that light. He had been advancing on the table at a fairly rapid pace, and now, stirred to his depths, he bounded forward with a hoarse cry.

Archie was at some pains to explain to his father-in-law later that, if the management left cold pies and things about all over the place, this sort of thing was bound to happen sooner or later. He urged that it was putting temptation in people's way, and that Mr. Brewster had only himself to blame. Whatever the rights of the case, the Buffet Froid undoubtedly came in remarkably handy at this crisis in the Sausage Chappie's life. He had almost reached the sideboard when the stout man patted the girl's cheek, and to seize a huckleberry pie was with him the work of a moment. The next instant the pie had whizzed past the other's head and burst like a shell against the wall.

There are, no doubt, restaurants where this sort of thing would have excited little comment, but the Cosmopolis was not one of them. Everybody had something to say, but the only one among those present who had anything sensible to say was the child in the sailor suit.

" Do it again ! " said the child, cordially.

The Sausage Chappie did it again. He took up a fruit salad, poised it for a moment, then decanted it over Mr. Gossett's bald head. The child's happy laughter rang over the restaurant. Whatever anybody else might think of the affair, this child liked it and was prepared to go on record to that effect.

Epic events have a stunning quality. They paralyze the faculties. For a moment there was a pause. The world stood still. Mr. Brewster bubbled inarticulately. Mr. Gossett dried himself sketchily with a napkin. The Sausage Chappie snorted.

The girl had risen to her feet and was staring wildly.

" John ! " she cried.

Even at this moment of crisis the Sausage Chappie was able to look relieved.

" So it is ! " he said. " And I thought it was Lancelot ! "

" I thought you were dead ! "

" I'm not ! " said the Sausage Chappie.

Mr. Gossett, speaking thickly through the fruit salad, was understood to say that he regretted this. And then confusion broke loose again. Everybody began to talk at once.

" I say ! " said Archie. " I say ! One moment ! "

Of the first stages of this interesting episode Archie had been a paralyzed spectator. The thing had numbed him. And then—

> Sudden a thought came, like a full-blown rose.
> Flushing his brow.

When he reached the gesticulating group, he was calm and business-like. He had a constructive policy to suggest.

" I say," he said. " I've got an idea ! "

" Go away ! " said Mr. Brewster. " This is bad enough without you butting in."

Archie quelled him with a gesture.

"Leave us," he said. "We would be alone. I want to have a little business-talk with Mr. Gossett." He turned to the movie-magnate, who was gradually emerging from the fruit-salad rather after the manner of a stout Venus rising from the sea. " Can you spare me a moment of your valuable time ? "

" I'll have him arrested ! "

" Don't you do it, laddie ! Listen ! "

" The man's mad ! Throwing pies ! "

Archie attached himself to his coat-button.

" Be calm, laddie ! Calm and reasonable ! "

For the first time Mr. Gossett seemed to become aware that what he had been looking on as a vague annoyance was really an individual.

" Who the devil are you ? "

Archie drew himself up with dignity.

" I am this gentleman's representative," he replied, indicating the Sausage Chappie with a motion of the hand. " His jolly old personal representative. I act for him. And on his behalf I have a pretty ripe proposition to lay before you. Reflect, dear old bean ! " he proceeded earnestly. " Are you going to let this chance slip ? The opportunity of a lifetime which will not occur again. By Jove, you ought to rise up and embrace this bird ! You ought to clasp the chappie to your bosom ! He has thrown pies at you, hasn't he ? Very well ! You are a movie-magnate. Your whole fortune is founded on chappies who throw pies. You probably scour the world for chappies who throw pies. Yet, when one comes right to you without any fuss or trouble and demonstrates before your very eyes the fact that he is without a peer as a pie-propeller, you get the wind up and talk about having him arrested ! Consider ! (There's a bit of cherry just behind your left ear.) Be sensible ! Why let your personal feelings stand in the way of doing yourself a bit of good ? Give this chappie a job and give it him quick, or we go elsewhere. Did you ever see Fatty Arbuckle handle pastry with a surer touch ? Has Charlie Chaplin got this fellow's speed and control ? Absolutely not ! I tell you, old friend, you're in danger of throwing away a good thing ! "

He paused. The Sausage Chappie beamed.

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"I've always wanted to go into the movies," he said. "I was an actor before the war. Just remembered!"

Mr. Brewster attempted to speak. Archie waved him down.

"How many times have I got to tell you not to butt in?" he said, severely.

Mr. Gossett's militant demeanour had become a trifle modified during Archie's harangue. First and foremost a man of business, Mr. Gossett was not insensible to the arguments which had been put forward. He brushed a slice of orange from the back of his neck, and mused awhile.

"How do I know this fellow would screen well?" he said, at length.

"Screen well!" cried Archie. "Of course he'll screen well! Look at his face! I ask you! The map! I call your attention to it!" He turned apologetically to the Sausage Chappie. "Awfully sorry, old lad, for dwelling on this, but it's business, you know." He turned to Mr. Gossett. "Did you ever see a face like that? Of course not! Why should I, as this gentleman's personal representative, let a face like that go to waste? There's a fortune in it! By Jove, I'll give you two minutes to think the thing over, and, if you don't talk business then, I'll jolly well take my man straight round to Mack Sennett or someone. We don't have to ask for jobs! We consider offers!"

There was a silence. And then the clear voice of the child in the sailor suit made itself heard again.

"Mummie!"

"Yes, darling?"



"HE TOOK UP A FRUIT SALAD, POISED IT FOR A MOMENT, THEN DECANTED IT OVER MR. GOSSETT'S BALD HEAD. THE CHILD'S HAPPY LAUGHTER RANG OVER THE RESTAURANT."

"Is the man with the funny face going to throw any more pies?"

"No, darling!"

The child uttered a scream of disappointed fury.

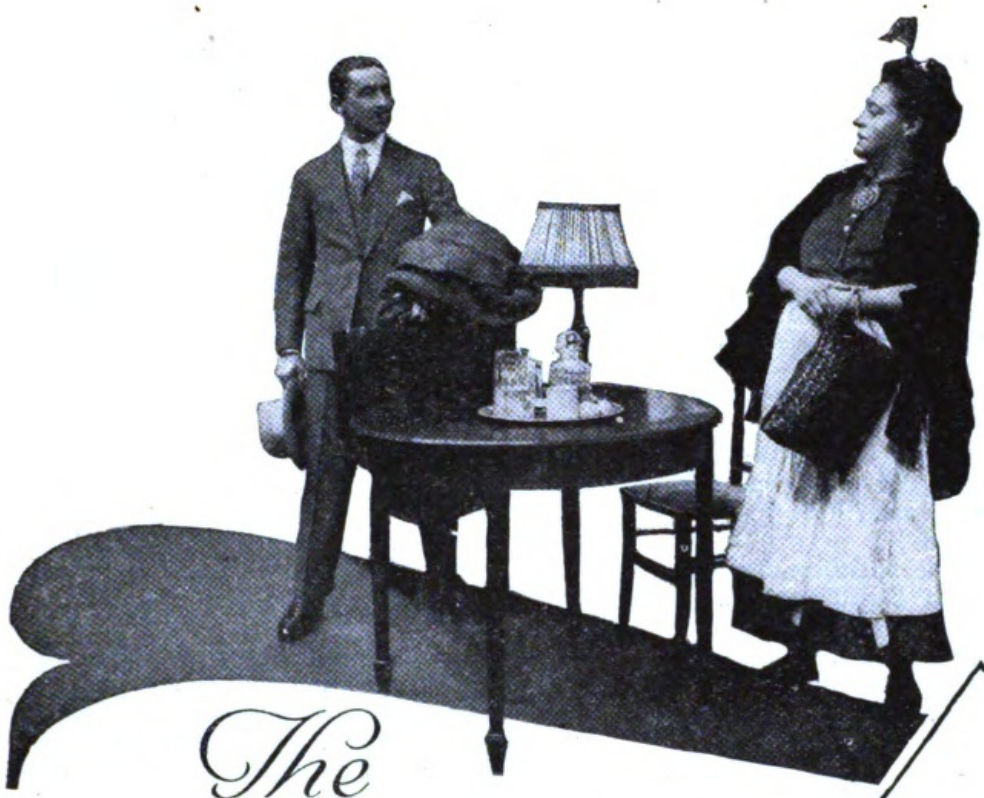
"I want the funny man to throw some more pies! I want the funny man to throw some more pies!"

A look almost of awe came into Mr. Gossett's face. He had heard the voice of the Public. He had felt the beating of the Public's pulse.

"Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings," he said, picking a piece of banana off his right eyebrow. "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings! Come round to my office!"

Next month: "Dear Old Squiffy."

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The MAN WHO CAME BACK

by Edgar Wallace

"'HALLOA!' SMILED PRENDEGAST. 'WHO THE DEVIL ARE YOU?'
"'LANGUAGE! LANGUAGE!' SAID THE SHOCKED MRS ARRIS."

The story of the much-discussed sketch in the new De Courville revue, "The Whirligig," at the Palace Theatre, of which Edgar Wallace is part author. Mr. Wallace as a writer of comedy is very much in demand at the present moment, since it has become a theatrical tradition that his dialogue secures three laughs a minute.

MRS. ARRIS dreamt of a day, a Sunday morning preferably, when she would open her *News of the World* and discover a large portrait of herself set amidst closely-printed columns dealing with a *cause célèbre*. If she had any further preference it was for a murder case of a sensational character, and it is perfectly true that the possibility of figuring in a divorce case never occurred to her. When such a splendid possibility dawned upon her mind it left her dazed and for the moment speechless.

The circumstances were as follows.

Donald Prendegast came back to his flat near Regent's Park unexpectedly. He had left Nairobi after a twelve months' residence in that thriving city and had written out a cablegram announcing his departure. He had found that cablegram in his pocket when he packed his clothes at Southampton.

So Prendegast came to his flat at eleven o'clock at night unannounced and unheralded, and found Mrs. Arris on the point of leaving. It was rather late for Mrs. Arris, who was a daily help, vulgarly described as a "char," but there had been certain distressing happenings at the flat that evening, and she had hovered round a weeping girl, offering her such rough help and sympathy as her experience suggested. It is true that the only

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material comfort she could suggest was "a drop of grool," but then Mrs. Arris had complete faith in the recuperative and therapeutical value of oatmeal.

Prendegast stared at the dumpy figure in the nondescript uniform of chardom. That his wife would be out he had expected. Evelyn made a point of dining on Wednesdays with his mother.

Mrs. Arris stared back at him.

"Halloa, young man!" she said, suspiciously.

"Halloa!" smiled Prendegast. "Who the devil are you?"

"Language, language!" said the shocked Mrs. Arris. "Where did you come from, if I might be so bold to ask?"

Prendegast laughed.

"Well, since you're so infernally inquisitive, I've come from Nairobi, which is in Central Africa."

"Oh, indeed!" said Mrs. Arris, uncomprehendingly, for the only "robi" she knew spelt his name quite differently and was called "George."

Prendegast walked to the fire, switched on the wall lights, and warmed his hands.

"You are surprised to see me, eh?" he smiled. "You're the skivvy, I suppose?"

A word abhorrent to Mrs. Arris, and she drew herself up.

"Pardon me!" she replied, not without dignity. "I am the lady that helps the woman that owns this flat, and without a word of a lie I *am* surprised to see you."

"I expect other people will be too," he laughed. "By Jove! It's good to be back in the old flat. Nothing changed, nothing gone!"

Mrs. Arris blinked. In a mat-bag resting on the sideboard and ready packed to take away were certain odds and ends of food which she had carefully collected before departure. They included an egg or two, an odd packet of tea, a few tins of milk, and the like, for Mrs. Arris had argued that in the condition in which her young mistress found herself the sight of superfluous food might distress her. So Mrs. Arris blinked and changed the subject.

"Might I ask, sir, who you are?" she demanded, with some justification.

"Of course. I'm Mr. Prendegast."

A light dawned on Mrs. Arris.

"Oh, indeed!" she said. "Why, there's a letter for you in the 'all. It's been there the best part of a week. I ought to have posted it before, but I forgot it."

Prendegast, in a forgiving mood, wagged an admonitory finger.

"So you're the person who kept my letters back. Get it for me, will you?"

When she had gone he looked round the pleasant sitting-room. Then he sniffed.

Cigars?

Who had been smoking cigars? Evelyn hated the smell of cigar smoke.

Mrs. Arris came back with the letter—it was addressed in Evelyn's hand.

"Excuse me, sir," said Mrs. Arris, a persistent woman and not wholly satisfied. "Are you any relation to Mrs. ——" She snapped her fingers in an effort of memory and explained. "I can never remember the name of a missus till I've been in the house a week, and I've never been in a house for a whole week."

Prendegast laughed.

"Any relation? I'm her husband, that's all!"

Mrs. Arris swayed and put a trembling hand to her somewhat discoloured face. Prendegast did not notice the movement, for his senses were otherwise engaged.

"There's a peculiar smell here," he said. "Has anybody been smoking cigars?"

He heard her gasp, and turned quickly.

"What's the matter with you? You haven't been smoking cigars?" he accused.

Mrs. Arris shook her head. There was something in her face that made the man's breath come quickly.

"Has anybody been here? Any visitors?" he demanded.

"Oh, sir!" wailed Mrs. Arris, appealingly.

"What is it?" demanded Prendegast, harshly. "Speak out! There's something wrong here."

"Did you say you was the lady's 'usband?" asked Mrs. Arris, faintly.

"Of course I'm the lady's husband. Why?"

For answer Mrs. Arris staggered to a chair and dropped into it.

"To think I should ever get mixed up in a scandal like this!"

"Scandal!" gasped the man.

"At my time o' life," she moaned, "when I don't even know what number bus passes the Divorce Court. I've always wanted to be in the *News of the World!*"

Prendegast went white.

"Divorce Court? Great heavens, you don't mean—— No, no, that couldn't be! that couldn't be!"

She nodded her melancholy confirmation of his worst fears.

"You smelt a cigar," she said, huskily. "It was 'im!"

"'Im? Him, I mean. What him?"

"The man who——" Mrs. Arris's voice failed.

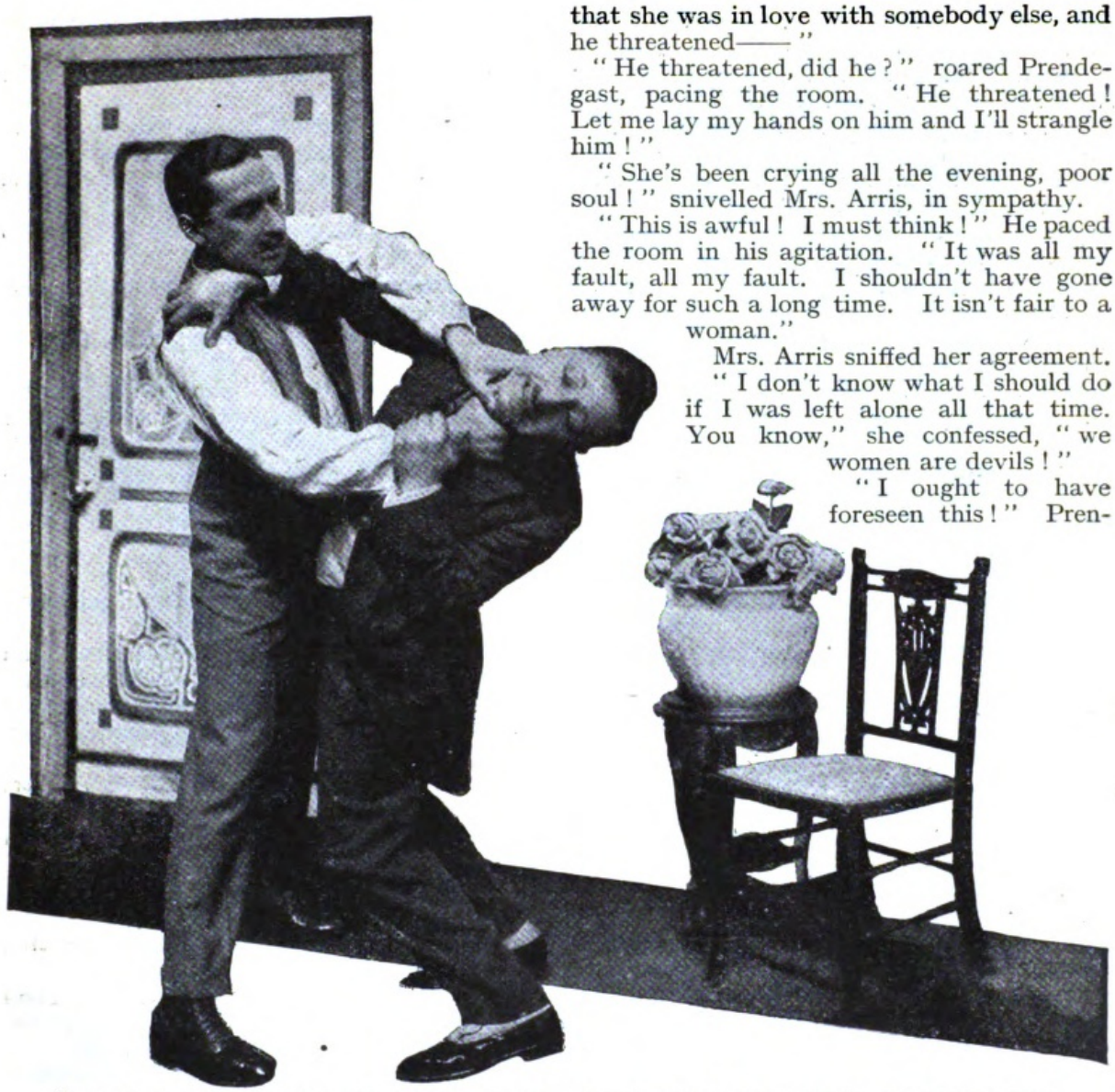
"Speak up! The man who what?" asked the man, hoarsely.

"He's here all the time."

"All the time? Merciful heavens! You don't mean he lives here?"

She nodded, and Prendegast staggered back, covering his eyes.

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"NEITHER WAITED FOR AN EXPLANATION, AND THE STRUGGLE WHICH FOLLOWED WAS DISAPPOINTINGLY SHORT."

" This can't be true ! " he groaned. " And I came home six weeks ahead of my time thinking to give her a surprise, picturing her delight. My God ! It's awful ! "

" My Gawd ! It *is* awful ! " quivered Mrs. Arris, to whom the tremendous possibilities of a sensational development were now apparent.

Prendegast leapt up, his face white.

" Where is he now ? " he demanded.

Mrs. Arris lowered her voice.

" He's gone to Manchester by the night train—there was an awful scene before he went, sir."

The man swallowed hard.

" Tell me the worst," he said, quietly, and Mrs. Arris shivered with pleasurable excitement.

" He's so jealous of her, and he's a good-looking young chap, too, and he kept saying that she was in love with somebody else, and he threatened—— "

" He threatened, did he ? " roared Prendegast, pacing the room. " He threatened ! Let me lay my hands on him and I'll strangle him ! "

" She's been crying all the evening, poor soul ! " snivelled Mrs. Arris, in sympathy.

" This is awful ! I must think ! " He paced the room in his agitation. " It was all my fault, all my fault. I shouldn't have gone away for such a long time. It isn't fair to a woman."

Mrs. Arris sniffed her agreement.

" I don't know what I should do if I was left alone all that time. You know," she confessed, " we women are devils ! "

" I ought to have foreseen this ! " Prendegast turned on her suddenly. " What does this man call himself ? "

" His name ? " She knit her forehead. " Let me think. I know it as well as I know my own. His name—I've got it !—it's Pinder ! "

" Pinder ! I'll remember that ! "

Prendegast resumed his pacing. If he talked, it was not to the frowzy old woman who watched him in rapturous contemplation. To her he was the chief figure in a drama in which she was to play no inconsiderable part. To him she had no existence.

This news was terrible, terrible—and he had never dreamt of it. Every letter she had written breathed love and affection. He must forgive her. He must ask for forgiveness, he who had put such a terrible temptation in the poor girl's way.

" Where is she ? " he asked.

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Mrs. Arris pointed to a door leading from the sitting-room.

"In the old room, eh?" he said, with a bitter smile, and walked to the door.

Mrs. Arris was by now mistress of ceremonies. Torn between a natural desire to shield a representative of her own sex and the beckoning finger of the glory which would be hers when she stepped soberly to a witness-box, the observed of all observers, her inclinations weighed on the side of humanity.

"If you put your ear to the key-hole," she whispered, huskily, "you can hear her sobbing something awful." She laid her grimy hand on his arm. "Don't be 'ard on her, sir. Remember you was young yourself once."

He opened the door. The room was in darkness, and mechanically he felt for the switch. The low sobbing of the room's occupant came to him and touched something in his heart. He clicked down the switch, but no light came. Then he heard a flustered explanation at his elbow, the "refuse wires is broke," and went in, closing the door behind him.

Mrs. Arris turned back discreetly.

"It's very 'ard," she muttered. "I suppose I'd better put a couple of those eggs back—he may be an egg-eater, coming from foreign parts. Oh, it's very 'ard on her, poor dear! The woman always pays." She hesitated with one egg in her hand. "He don't look as if he'd eat more than one egg." She put the egg back into the basket. "Anyway, I don't suppose he'll have an appetite even for one. Drink's what he'll want."

She closed the mouth of the bag quickly as Prendegast appeared in the doorway. He had taken off his coat and vest and he was visibly agitated.

"Get me a glass of water, will you?" he called, urgently. "My wife is simply hysterical. She won't even speak to me."

Mrs. Arris poured out the water with a shaking hand.

"Coax her, sir," she pleaded. "You know, us women are won by wooing, as the saying goes."

He took the water and went back into the bedroom, Mrs. Arris watching with glazed eyes. Yet the splendour of the situation could not be obliterated by any pity she might feel.

Scandal in high life! Intelligent charwoman makes amazing revelations! Sensation in court! Portrait of Mrs. Arris! These and other visions of a glittering publicity passed through her vague mind.

A key turning in the outer door aroused her and she gazed in dismay at the newcomer, who stamped into the room, throwing down his travelling bag.

It was the sinful Pinder.

"Halloa! Haven't you gone, Mrs. Arris?" he asked, with a frown.

"No, sir," said the almost inaudible Mrs. Arris.

"Well, clear out!" he snarled.

She found herself surprisingly breathless.

"Did you lose your train, sir?" she quavered.

"Yes—no—what the dickens is it to do with you?"

He brushed past her and was making for the bedroom when Mrs. Arris, with unsuspected agility, slipped between him and the door.

"Over my dead body!" she said, heroically.

He scowled at her, then scowled at a decanter on the sideboard.

"Oh, you've been drinking, eh? And I thought I'd locked the tantalus. Now, you take my advice and get away before I send for a policeman."

Mrs. Arris bridled.

"And you take my advice and get away before I send for an ambulance."

Mr. Pinder was not a good-tempered man at the best of times. Now he was incoherent. Yet he had need of speech, for at that precise moment the bedroom door opened and Prendegast came out.

For a second both men glared at one another; then:—

"So you're the brute!" they yelled in unison.

"What were you doing in that room?" hissed Pinder.

"What are you doing in this flat?" grated Prendegast.

Neither waited for an explanation, and the struggle which followed was disappointingly short—for the one spectator.

Prendegast was the heavier man and in better condition. In twenty seconds Mr. Pinder was flung bodily through the door and the door was slammed on him.

Prendegast came back to the table and sank into a chair.

"I wish I'd killed him!" he breathed.

Then his eyes fell upon the letter which Mrs. Arris had forgotten to post. It was her confession, he thought. How tragic that he had arrived home in time to intercept it! He kissed the envelope tenderly, tore open the flap, and began to read:—

"Dearest Donald,—As you will not be back for three months I have let the flat furnished to a nice couple—a Mr. and Mrs. Pinder. . . ."

He repeated the words slowly, and his hair began to rise.

". . . a Mr. and Mrs. Pinder. I am staying at the Grand Hotel until you come back."

It was the furious thumping on the door which brought him out of his trance. Then he beckoned Mrs. Arris.

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"What did you say the name of these people was?"

"Pinder. Mr. and Mrs. Pinder."

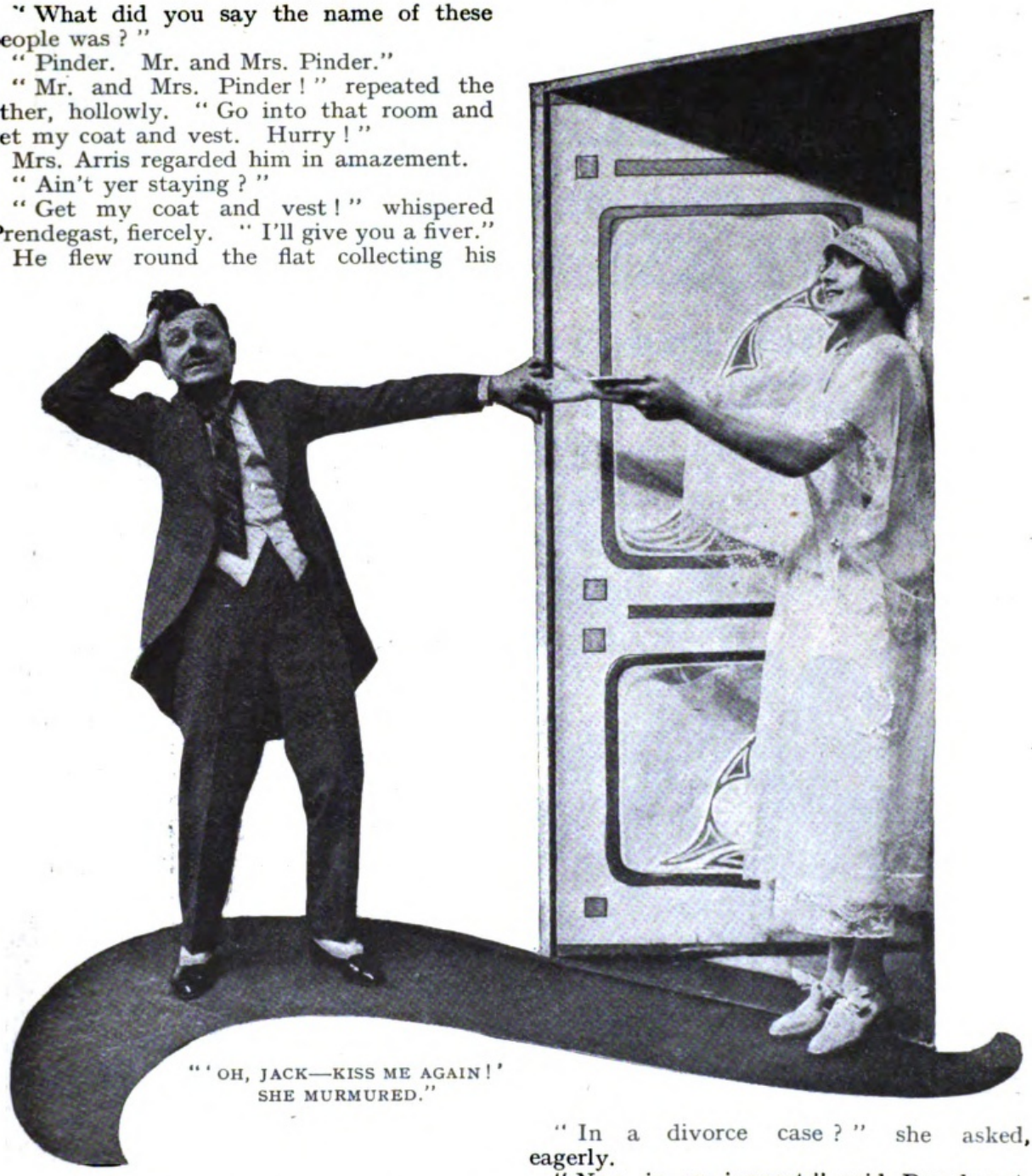
"Mr. and Mrs. Pinder!" repeated the other, hollowly. "Go into that room and get my coat and vest. Hurry!"

Mrs. Arris regarded him in amazement.

"Ain't yer staying?"

"Get my coat and vest!" whispered Prendegast, fiercely. "I'll give you a fiver."

He flew round the flat collecting his belongings, snatched his coat from the astounded Mrs. Arris, and thrust a bank-note into her hand.



"'OH, JACK—KISS ME AGAIN!' SHE MURMURED."

"Tell me—I've forgotten," he asked, quickly—"is there a fire-escape here?"

"Yes, sir, through this window. But don't go, sir. She'll never forgive you!"

Prendegast threw up the window and stepped out on to a little iron balcony.

"When I am gone, open the door. I think you said you'd like your name in the *News of the World?*"

"Yes, sir, I would."

"Well," said the man, grimly, "it'll be in next Sunday."

"In a divorce case?" she asked, eagerly.

"No; in an inquest," said Prendegast, and disappeared.

She hesitated; then, as the door crashed open and the disheveiled Mr. Pinder flew into the room, she followed.

There was a maniacal glare in Mr. Pinder's eye.

"Gone!" he howled, and his eye fell upon the window.

Before he could follow his wife stepped into the room, a smile on her lips, the light of love in her eyes.

"Oh, Jack—kiss me again!" she murmured.

"'Again'!" moaned Mr. Pinder, and collapsed.

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SIR JAMES BARRIE

The Man who made PETER PAN

by

E · T · RAYMOND

Author of

"Uncensored Celebrities," "All and Sundry," etc.



SIR JAMES BARRIE.
Photo. Beresford.

IT should be a delightful thing to be Sir James Matthew Barrie. I say nothing of the Barrie baronetcy; though most of us, scornful of such matters in theory, would welcome one, especially on the terms it was offered in this case. Nor do I lay much stress on the Barrie fortune, though it must be almost as large as that of a second-rate war-speculator. These are the substantials Sir James shares with many men no wholesome person would dream of envying.



WENDY AND PETER HEADING A PROCESSION

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But Sir James Barrie has so much more that no worldly millionaire can aspire to. He is lord of a treasure no Chancellor of the Exchequer can raid; he is monarch of a realm no envious rival can devastate. Here is a king whose subjects never give trouble, a parent whose children never develop mumps or bad manners, a tourist who can always step from his London breakfast-table into that bright land of fancy where everything is engaged in an eternal game of leap-frog.

A delightful thing to be able to dream such dreams; still more delightful to be able to imprison them in the printed page, so that all the world can share. Perhaps better yet, to be free to return at will from a glorious jaunt in shadowland, and enjoy your solid fact of a steak and a fire with the more zest. Time was when Sir James Barrie, like some noble sportsmen, had to shoot over the coverts of his imagination for the pot and the market. That time has long vanished; with no anxiety as to the larder or the rent, he can now take his gun when he likes, with no object but pure sport. To drop metaphor, he can please himself whether he writes at all, what he writes, when he writes, how he writes. Money, honour, troops of admirers, liberty such as the great of the earth lack as much as the little—what lot could be pleasanter? Especially when one has behind one, to give the due relish of contrast, memories of early poverty and discouragement, of the bread which is bitter and the editorial stairs that break the heart of the climber.

Yes, Sir James Barrie should be of all men most happy. Yet, if you were fortunate enough to meet him (and the average king



OF CHARACTERS FROM "PETER PAN." *Drawn by H. M. Brock.*

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is more easily met), you would not take him to be an exuberantly happy man. His eyes, big and pathetic, like a seal's, give a hint of chronic weariness; he wears the kind of moustache one associates with the idea of hope abandoned; the great dome-like forehead which gives a rather topsy-turvy effect to the thin face and small figure is lined with the wrinkles of incurable care; he speaks (if you can get him to speak at all) with a sighing melancholy. Altogether you will feel sorry for him. You will think, very likely, of the old story of Grimaldi and the doctor: "Go and get a good laugh; see Grimaldi." "Alas! I *am* Grimaldi." For years Barrie has meant merriment alike for the ten thousand and the million. He has commanded the shrill laughter of the child, the gurgling merriment of the schoolboy, the giggle of fair eighteen, the guffaw of the middle-aged male, the chuckle of senility. For himself, he may be seen, once and again, to smile — a wistful, forlorn sort of smile, as of one who would say, "Yes, I know that was very smart and clever; I am intellectually persuaded that I ought to laugh, and I am really trying my very best; please don't hit me if I just fail to convince." As for a real laugh, the kind of convulsion which symbolizes man's momentary superiority to all things, that laugh may have been heard from the poor journalist. It is foreign to the rich playwright.

In a charming trifle about Fleet Street Barrie makes his Scotch hero meet a specially high-spirited man, whose story he is told. This merry individual was, it seemed, once a popular humorist. He made a great income, his wife behaved nicely, he seemed to have everything man could wish for. But he could not laugh. Nothing interested, nothing amused him. At last he had to choose between his work and the grave. He resigned, got a job as London Correspondent of a provincial paper, and was cured within a month. His sense of humour was restored! I am almost tempted to advise Sir James Barrie to recall that recipe. Let him lobby for the *Thrums People's Friend*, or understudy Mr. Garvin, or write for *Punch*, or engage in some other responsible and solemn undertaking. It could do him no harm, and it might do him good.



SIR J. M. BARRIE, TAKEN UNAWARES.

ONE OF THE VERY FEW SNAPSHOTS EVER OBTAINED OF THE AUTHOR OF "PETER PAN."

The Barrie manner is puzzling enough to those who know little of the real man. When he was visiting the Front a certain Staff officer took immense pains to show him everything in the pleasantest way. There was scant sign of appreciation, and the gallant soldier bade farewell at Boulogne rather in the mood of that epigrammatic visitor of Tennyson's, who complained that he had come to see a lion and found only a bear. The gallant soldier was quite mistaken. It was no bear; only a very shy little man with a tied tongue and a greedy brain, who simply could not be bothered to talk "gup" just then. A few days later the true Barrie was revealed in a charming letter of the kind that one makes a codicil about. Nearly all Barrie stories have their point in this taciturnity. Barrie once found himself beside another celebrity at a public dinner. "Do you feel like talking?" he asked. "Not much," was the reply. "Neither do I," rejoined Barrie, and the rest was silence. During a rehearsal of "The Little Minister," one of the actors had just spoken the line, "In the midst of life we are in death," when part of the stage collapsed, and Barrie had to be fished out of the cavern where the orchestra is imprisoned. When on his feet again he uttered the one word "Evidently." Of this sort of humorous brevity he is a master. Once he was shown a theatre programme

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with most of the names in small type, while the "star" (conceited and rather incompetent) was printed in great letters beneath, thus :—

AND
MR. DASH.

"Shouldn't it be 'but'?" asked Barrie, in his quiet, bored way, and it was quite a second or two before the point was fully grasped. Ordinarily, it must be said, this economy of speech does not contribute to raise the social temperature. But it is related that on one occasion Barrie broke ice instead of making it. The scene was one of the solemnest of London clubs. Mr. Barrie, as he then was, offered a friendly word to a fellow-member taking tea. Tears filled the poor man's eyes. "I have been a member here for thirty-seven years," he said, "and yours are the first kind words ever addressed to me within these walls."

If one cares to examine critically the plays and novels of this eminent man, one can always detect beneath the surface sparkle some tinge of the depression reflected in his manner. Naturally enough, pathos mixes with the humour of the Scotch stories. But even in a cheery trifle, almost farcical, like "When a Man's Single," there is a very real under-current of bitterness; the young writer has analysed in advance his future success and is not taken in by it. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity—including writing for the *Daily Telegraph* and marrying a bit above one's station": that is the burden of the whole thing. You may be bored if you don't get what you want; you are sure to be bored if you do. At a much later period the private sigh accompanying the public grimace is still more marked. Such plays as "Dear Brutus" and "The Twelve-Pound Look" are really meaningless unless they mean that success is a delusion.

Perhaps it comes natural to a Scotsman whose national heroes are John Knox and Robert Burns—this Barrie mixture of jest, sentiment, and fatalistic gloom. Sir James Barrie is a Scotsman. The fact is possibly quite well known, but I may as well get it firmly grasped, since it is the most important fact about him. He was born at Kirriemuir sixty years ago—a queer, solemn-looking baby, with enormous eyes and an apparent sense of grievance. Long before he went to school at Dumfries he had drunk in all the Scotchness he had not inherited, till he could hold no more, and three decades in London have left the store intact. All these years in one of the Scotchest parts of Scotland meant an immense accumulation of literary capital; a brain so receptive, an eye so sharp and humorous, could never have had a moment's idleness. But Barrie was no precocious boy. He wrote, but only so-so; he acted, but with no particular talent; he read, but showed little sign of taste or fancy. Quite early, however, he had determined on his course in life. When he left Edinburgh University two maiden ladies asked him what he meant to be. "An author," was the unabashed reply. On which, says Barrie, "they flung up their hands, and one exclaimed reproachfully, 'And you an M.A.!'"



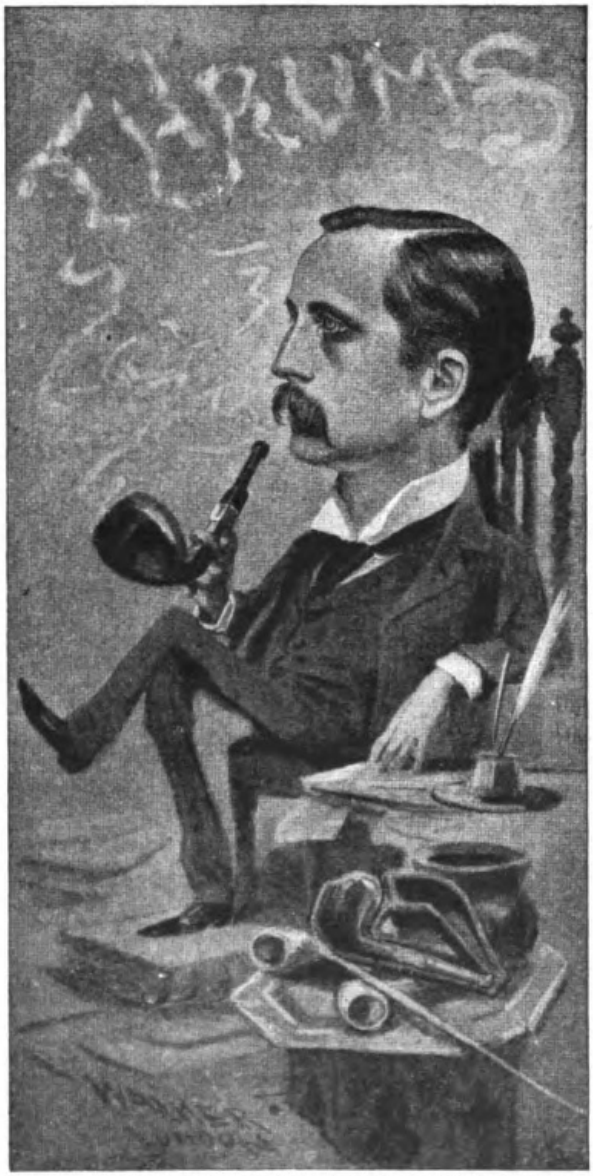
THE WINDOW IMMORTALIZED IN "A WINDOW IN THRUMS."

(By courtesy of Hodder & Stoughton.)

Many young men have said the same thing; Barrie meant it. It may well be that a knowledge of his limitations, rather than confidence in his powers, led him to the conviction that, whether he wrote ill or well, he must still write. Young people may not always know what they are fit for; they generally know better than their elders what they are unfit for. Barrie must have felt that, while he might be a bad failure as an author, he must be a quite tragic failure as (say) an insurance clerk; and though it is sad to fail in literature, the spectacle of a

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failure in insurance is one to wring brassy bosoms and rough hearts of flint. Journalism is the artillery preparation for a successful frontal attack (delivered under book cover) on the public. Like other kinds of artillery preparation, it is very expensive, and not at all sure; the heaviest metal will hardly sweep away at once all the wire entanglements which (perhaps happily) protect the reader from the literary aspirant. Barrie became a journalist. He began as leader-writer in the pleasant town of Nottingham. No bibliomaniac has yet thought of reprinting his leaders, and I have been unable to consult the files. But he himself allows us to assume that he was omnipresent and omniscient in that local paper. He "did" the politics. Criticism of the Nottingham member may have been reserved for a more mature hand, but he was allowed to deal pretty much as he liked (within the limits of the paper's policy) with mere world statesmen. In literature he could "patronize the Tennysons," but probably it was the editor who said nice things about the first novel of Miss Alderman Tompkinson. It may be he was the identical young man who wrote local notes under the motto, "Now step I forth to whip hypocrisy." One thing is certain: he earned his three guineas a week; everybody earns his money who writes for the benefit of an English provincial public.



THE CREATOR OF "MY LADY NICOTINE."
BY OLIVER PAQUE.
(From "English Humorists of To-day," by J. A. Hammerton. Hodder & Stoughton.)

Barrie has drawn a little silhouette of himself at this time: a shy, awkward, unjovial youth, given much to books, little to company, often to be seen mooning about at night near the Castle, with his thoughts (Scotch-like) "three hundred miles due north," but also with a determination (Scotch-like too) to neglect no opportunity that led still further south. He never wavered in his resolve to conquer London or die. He even answered an advertisement regarding some small post on a financial paper, and might (had the fates so decided) have written disinterestedly concerning the movements of gold and the tendencies of the dollar. The fates, however, decided that his knowledge of the mysteries of specie should arrive quite otherwise. The once famous Greenwood, of the *St. James's Gazette*, had accepted a few articles. Barrie wrote to him confiding his wish to enter London journalism, stated that he would be satisfied to begin with a pound a week, and ended: "I shall be guided by your candid advice." Greenwood replied: "For God's sake, don't come." Thus encouraged, Barrie at once gave notice to his Nottingham employers. After all, he thought it was better to take the chance of quick starvation in Fleet Street than the certainty of slow starvation in the provinces. Starvation as a free lance was then a greater risk than now. Newspapers kept to news; magazines were few and unreceptive; the vast popular journalism of to-day was not.

There were three years during which Barrie, like many another passenger to Parnassus, tested the filling virtues of the penny bun; he has written gratefully of it, as all should who know its efficacy (with the due cup of coffee) to produce at least the illusion of repletion. In these three years Barrie oscillated between doubt whether he knew his business and conviction that the editors did not know theirs; he hated editors in those days. Then the something happened which generally arrives to the man of ability who has the nerve to "stick it." Dr. (now Sir) Robertson Nicoll gave him

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J. M. BARRIE, A. E. W. MASON, AND THEIR GUIDE IN SWITZERLAND.

his chance in the *British Weekly*. There, under the name of "Gavin Ogilvy" (his mother's maiden name was Ogilvy), he wrote matter that attracted some attention and gave him a certain standing with the cashier. The living was secure. His first bid for higher things was made with "Better Dead," cheerier than its title; in 1888, the sixth year of the Barrie Hegira, he scored a *succès d'estime* with "Auld Licht Idylls," and in 1889 the roar that greeted "A Window in Thrums" showed that the real thing had come.

The popularity of the "Kailyard" school, of which he was by far the liveliest master, is a little curious, especially when we remember that it synchronized with the great Kipling boom. It really seemed as if one half of the British public demanded extreme localism and a flavour of Hymnal Companion simply because the other half had booked east of Suez to avoid the Ten Commandments. Barrie, like a sensible man, took full advantage of the craze while it lasted; he came in on the ground floor, and unloaded before the market was stale. Others were still nauseating a fatigued public with an outworn formula when he had tapped more than one new vein. This dexterity in adapting himself to the public taste is no doubt the secret of an enormous monetary success. It may be also some small fraction of the secret of Sir James Barrie's low spirits. All men who think in terms of other men's tastes, from chefs upwards (or downwards), are prone to a certain sadness; the *pêche Melba* we eat carelessly may imply the misanthropy of a genius who yearns for perfect self-expression in a beefsteak-and-kidney pudding.

"Peter Pan" was a "dream child" of Barrie which he put forward, with a deprecatory cough, to the late Charles Frohman, together with a daughter, "Alice-sit-by-the Fire," more conventionally begotten. He did not think it would pay, but he would like it produced. Frohman, a man of business but also a man of very real imagination, a poet in the odd guise of a syndicate monger, was cool over "Alice" and wildly enthusiastic over "Peter." He saw in the comedy, quite justly, only a momentary idea; in the fantasy he discerned a quality of appeal altogether different, something that was old when Scheherazade began the Thousand Nights, and will be still new when Dr. Addison's housing scheme is complete. Frohman felt the magic of "Open Sesame," that magic which connects the most everyday things with all marvel and mystery. We can best see Barrie's wizardry by comparing his work with that of the plagiarists who have used his mannerism without his magic. The

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formula is nothing in such things. There are books ingeniously crammed with the supernatural that give fewer thrills than a parish magazine. The whole virtue of "Peter Pan" is not in the conception, or the machinery, but the spirit; we believe in it because the author does. He has that mysterious power, so rare, to become veritably freeman of a city (even though only a city of nonsense) not built by hands. It would be almost irreverent to compare the very small with the very great. But only the "man who had been in hell" could have written the Inferno; and Barrie could not have given us authentic fairy land if he had not gone there himself.

But, perhaps unfortunately, he seems unable to come back. The very success of "Peter Pan" forced him to repeat where he could hardly surpass himself. Henceforth he could vary the theme as much as he liked, but he must not forsake the mood; "real Barrie" must always mean whimsicality, Puckishness, the elfin outlook on the human pageant. Now, it is good for all of us to make occasional trips to fairyland, but there is no place to live in, as the dying woman said, like old England; before starting for Oberon's kingdom you should make quite certain about the passport and the return ticket. Sir James Barrie seems to have lost his; he cannot get back from fairyland and, while he first wrote about it with the enthusiasm of a globe-trotter, he shows now a little of the weariness of the exile.



SIR JAMES BARRIE AT EIGHTY!
A FANCY PORTRAIT BY HARRY FURNISS

No man or woman of the theatre who has played his parts but speaks of him with deep affection. He won the heart, as well as the business esteem, of one so wholly different from his own quiet self as Charles Frohman, and he has been a hero to all his heroines—Miss Maude Adams, Miss Pauline Chase, Miss Irene Vanbrugh, and many others.

But after all every man is an island, and the goodwill of his fellows, though much indeed, is not everything.

I may be fanciful, but I cannot help feeling that Sir James Barrie has still very much in him that he cannot get expressed, and that he yearns, as all true workmen do, to accomplish *the* masterpiece (not in the "Peter Pan" mood) which he must know should be within the capacity of his rare and delicate genius. It seems ungracious, of course, to say so. Why not be thankful without question for what the gods send? I had written the greater part of this article when I went to the revival of "The Admirable Crichton," and the first act was not over when I determined to tear up the whole thing. For here was a specimen of pre-Pan Barrie at its best—wit, humour, and philosophy blended in a delicate and delicious whole. What impertinence, I reflected with something like a blush, to take up any attitude towards so delightful a wizard in words other than that of closing one's mouth and opening one's eyes and ears and taking what he cares to give you! For there is not only genius in the man but something that transcends mere intellect; that kindliness, that wisdom of the heart which goes so much farther than mere wisdom of the head. What a gift he has brought, during these years, to the tired old world—the gift of clean and wholesome laughter, that leaves one always a little better and yet, oddly, a little more clear-headed! And yet, when it was all over, I could not help thinking that I was right after all, and that *the* thing remains to do. "Crichton" was very near it, but there is still better in Barrie; a comedy—perhaps two or three comedies—with as much of the eternal in their kind as "Peter Pan" has in its kind. Perhaps it is really our fault that it has not yet arrived.

There was a foolish patron, it is said, who once commanded Michel Angelo to model a statue in snow. Are we wiser in asking a great genius to do so much wonderful sugar-work? Who can say? But, while I yield to no man in appreciating the confectionery, I still feel to the core of me that besides the talents so splendidly used there are others still finer that have not had their full expression. Some day, perhaps, Sir James will write that comedy, and we shall see that the boy who would not grow up has suddenly attained the stature of a giant. But should we love him quite so much? Perhaps not.

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The PACK of CARDS

A RUGBY FOOTBALL STORY by HYLTON CLEAVER



Illustrated by E. PRATER

I.

TIMOTHY wrote to Angela :—

"I wanted to ask you something last night, but I'd a real bad cold in the head, and it seemed to me that to propose to you through the nose would be a sort of personal affront. Now you are going abroad for two whole months, and I wonder if you would help me through the time of waiting by just telling me: Are you ever going to marry anyone, and if so, what kind of man will he have to be?"

And Angela answered :—

"I think I shall marry a Rugger International."

To Timothy this notion was both novel and attractive. True, he was not a Rugger International, but he was a Rugger Blue, and according to the press his future was a sporting certainty to which the public could not close their eyes. So Timothy wrote back :—

"Is that a promise?"

And after a little while Angela placed her thumb gently between her lips, and with her other hand wrote "Yes" on the bottom of Timothy's letter, and sent it back to him.

Timothy never came to her again. He went down from the 'Varsity suddenly, whilst she was still away, and when she came back he had vanished.

For a little while Angela fretted, and in the end she went boldly to Timothy's father and said unto him: "Speak, O Man! *What* have you done with Timothy?"

Timothy's father was a grim, hard-featured tyrant whose hair was white as the snow, and he leaned towards her out of his chair and bent his brows upon her; but Angela was not afraid. To have told the truth he should have commenced the story with an explanation. He should have said, "You were away, and Timothy was sorely stricken with love sickness. He is young and he sought an antidote in cards." But the old man knew nothing of that, and he only said, "Timothy was tempted into gambling. When he began to lose he increased the stakes. He went on losing, and finally he was rooked. He asked for more money, and not knowing how he was using it, I sent it him, and he threw that money, which was good, after the other money, which was bad, and sent again to me for more. So I went to him. I suspected that he was in the hands of some card-sharper, but he would not tell me whether or no. He only said that if he had given up playing because he was losing they would have called him 'Funk.' When a young man gets taken that way there is only one remedy. Timothy was dependent on me. He lost

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his means of livelihood by a snap of the fingers as a man loses his life by sudden death. I said to him, From this hour you are penniless. Leave Oxford and go out into the world. In three years there will be money coming to you in your own right, and in the meanwhile you may work for your living with your own hands, and fight, if need be, for your bread, with other men in the gutter. And if you get through, you will understand the value of money when it comes to you.' He has gone," the old man added; 'I do not know where he has gone. He went from Oxford with only a few shillings in his pocket. Perhaps he had to carry somebody's bag to the station, to make the price of his railway fare."

Angela went away.

Two Rugby seasons passed, and the years moved heavily like great steam-rollers along the road of surmise, but Angela hunted and was men's quarry, danced and was candle to the moths, laughed a little and was loved a lot, but was never kissed; whilst slowly her heart took unto itself the sad shape of an interrogation mark.

And then one day she stood, hands in her pockets, one small foot poking severely at a log upon the fire, and you will understand that Angela had grown tired of loneliness.

Once a week ever since he had first been cut off from his own world Timothy had gone with humble tread into the hallowed precincts of a public library, there to look out for Angela's portrait in the weekly galleries of folk who were going to be married, which appeared in high-toned weeklies.

He thought that if ever she broke her promise he would find her then looking back at him from one of those galleries of portraits, because she rode to hounds and was the daughter of an Honourable, and also because her mother would wish to find out whether they would describe her as the beautiful Angela, daughter of herself, or as Angela, the daughter of herself, the beautiful mother.

And in this way it was that he found it out at last. The blow that he had feared most struck him just as he had imagined it might, one very ordinary afternoon as he sat in that public library and opened the paper out before him. For a moment he could do nothing but stare. Every feeling that he had seemed gradually to dry within him. At last he dropped his eyes to his clothing. It was frayed and shiny and told its own tale. His father had wanted him to see the world from the standpoint of poverty, and he had done so from such close quarters that for the rest of his life he would feel that only distance could lend enchantment to the view.

When he looked up he noticed an interesting fact. Within a few feet of his eyes there was hanging suspended a cold white board, and the board said sharply, "Silence." In all his after-life he always remembered that. The public library did not know that one swears if one is hurt a little, but not if one is hurt a lot.

Angela was going to marry Sladden.

He rose now out of his chair. He looked round as if in search of somebody to tell. His choker and the unshaven shadows on his cheeks jumped back into memory, for the library was dotted with respectability, and there was nobody there at all who would understand. Sladden had won her over by charm of manner. He could win anybody over by charm of manner. He, Timothy himself, had been won over, and then Sladden had cheated him at cards, and Sladden's friends had cheated him, and he had never understood how they had done it until it was too late. Now he had won over Angela, and he would cheat her as he had cheated him.

At last he knew that he wanted air and must have it, and he made his way bitterly towards the door. The cold of the night helped to dissipate his stupefaction, and when he came to the tall dark house of mournful shadows where he had his lodging new thoughts were crowding upon him. He climbed the stairs and stood in his room a moment looking round at the wretched furniture, and then he moved suddenly to a drawer and drew forth a wallet. He would sit down and play again the game of patience that was almost his only recreation.

This was the kind of game that might be played by a man who is slowly going mad, for it was not played with the two and fifty cards of every day, but, lo and behold, with a pack of ancient cuttings from the *Sportsman*, and the game was to set them out upon the table and to move them gradually into chronological order until they made up the diary of a young man's progress towards an All-England cap. Always he played them out one by one until he came finally to the last card in the pack, and then he would sit looking strangely at the table like a man checked suddenly in a game of chess, because this game that he had made up never could be finished. The one essential card was always missing from his pack. There was no cutting there that told how he had been picked for England.

To-night he went just as far as ever, and then he slowly drew out from his wallet the joker, and he played that bitterly. It was a letter, and it held a promise written in a girl's handwriting at the bottom of a page. He dropped his head into his hands and gave in. He was done. However badly he

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needed to go back to Angela now, he had no means whatever wherewith to go. Through all his life in the murky parts of London he had never tried either to hold employment or to rise, because he had believed that to stay too long in one place would lead sooner or later to detection. He would be recognized and dragged into the light of day. He did not want to be recognized. His father had challenged him to live without his help, and he would do it, without giving entertainment to his friends. He had worked only well enough to live.

In this way he had made his bed; now he must lie upon it.

Angela was in danger and he could not go to her. He was penniless. He was in rags. He was living from hand to mouth. He had thought that to be unrecognized made this worth while. Now he was realizing the uncounted cost. For perhaps a few minutes he sat there beaten. And then he slowly tightened in every sinew of his body. In the darkness of his day a quick light had shown him suddenly the pointing finger of a signpost. There was one way back. He sat back abruptly in his chair, pushing his playing cards in a heap to one side. Then he stood up. Somebody was coming up the creaky stairs. Somebody was at the door. He went across the room and opened it. In the shadows of the landing there stood a little man with great black-rimmed glasses set upon his nose and a shapeless little bowler hat upon his head. Timothy reached out and laid a hand upon his shoulder.

"Come along in. I want you badly, Boggins."

The little man came in stiffly, as if he were half afraid that if he swayed a little out of his course his hat would overbalance and fall off his head.

'Why do you wear that awful little hat?" said Timothy, sharply.

"'Cause me 'ead's cold," Boggins said.

There came a little silence. At last Timothy spoke again.

"Boggins," said he, 'I'm going back."

"Surely," said Boggins, after a moment's consideration, "you're not going dressed like that?"

"No. Not quite like this; and I shall want enough money to last me through the rest of the football season, too. I only decided five minutes ago how I shall get it, Boggins, and I'm going to steal."

The little man's eyes grew wide as saucers. Timothy laid a hand upon his arm.

"Not quite steal. Some years ago a man stole money from me by cheating—several hundred pounds—and now I think that it's time I got it back. It might just keep me in London until I get my International cap." He looked away. He began to talk absently, as if his thoughts were wandering down a disjointed trail towards a definite end. "Sometimes I've been to his house. I've even played cards there with his friends. He keeps a great deal of money in his room, in notes and coin; he's always gambling with it. Most of it is in a drawer of a writing-table. I remember noticing." His voice was rising passionately. 'Four hundred pounds of that money's mine, and I'm going to get it back."

He turned to Boggins once more and seized him in a vice-like grip.

"*You* know the way to break into a house, and you've got to show me the way to break into his."

First through the dark had come, as it were in dim perspective, a wandering bead of light, that came, in the end, to rest against the catch, and vanished—then little noises.

The window was being opened very cautiously; there was a pause, and then, riding in silently on the cold draught of the night, there came two men, and the two men halted and stood, silent and hesitant, somewhere upon the carpet, the hand of one watchfully upon the elbow of the other.

"Every time that we played here," a hushed voice said, "the money was always put into that drawer and locked away for the night, and if——"

Then the shadow of a little man moved forward, and the voice died away. There came a last pause—more little noises—a sudden grinding like the wrenching of a heavy-handed dentist at a tooth—a snap—and then more quick light and the rustle of notes and a happy suffocated laugh.

The man who had stood throughout on the threshold of the room got ready. He moved, and with one quick deft turn of the wrist had switched on the light—was between them. He just had time to say:—

"Who the devil are you?"

Then Timothy took one stride to his front, and his fist swung out from his shoulder with all his strength and crashed on the point of the other's jaw, and that ill-advised intruder spun on his heel, wavered, received a classic upper-cut, and fell in a heap on the floor.

Then from the open drawer Timothy gathered an armful of notes as if they were flowers of the field, and began to push the little man out through the window into the dark.

No word of any kind passed between them until they were out of the garden and away on the road towards London, and then Boggins turned to him.

Who was 'e?"

'I don't know."

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"You 'it 'im aside the 'ead," said Boggins. "Supposing you left your thumb-print on his fice?"

"Whoever he was," said Timothy, "from the moment he first wakes up he'll always remember *my* face; and if I let him see me again before I get my International cap, I'm done."

II.

THE whistle blew and at once the forwards were round and shoving. The last man came up and dipped in his head amongst those writhing bodies like an excited ostrich. In went the ball. Vicious boots had captured it and were driving it back. The instant that it was out a little man darted at it and flung it far out to the neighbourhood where Timothy should be. Timothy leapt. The ball shot into his hands, and all in a moment he had found top speed and was away, with one man reaching despairingly for his knees and another recoiling from the suddenness of his hand-off.

Down either touch-line men seemed to hold their breath. He had dodged out of reach of a forward's threatening cuddle. He had stopped once in his stride and shot away at a tangent. He had circled round a wild man who had swooped for his knees, and now he was out at last in the open, streaking up-field like a fox with the hunt in full-cry after. Timothy settled the ball in the hollow of his arm, and out from the hiding where it had lain for two long years he summoned the last of his speed. The full-back came into view and poised himself for a high dive. Timothy glanced round once for support, heard a man call to him loudly, saw a three-quarter sprinting alongside with hands held ready and a clear field, and so, as the back swung round his knees and held on as they fell, the ball flew out delightfully hard and true, and that glad three-quarter took it devotedly to his heart and scored.

Timothy rose to his feet again and stood for a moment gravely in contemplation as somebody took the place-kick.

That would be the last score of the match, and he was grimly satisfied. The toil of manual labour had not flattened his feet; the lean days that had seldom brought him one solid meal in the round of the clock had not altogether sapped his stamina. He would be able to get back his form.

Then it was no-side, and in the gangway that led to the changing-room a man with a note-book darted upon him and touched his arm.

'Surely——" he began. "You'll pardon me, but aren't you the Saville who—— Aren't you the Oxford Blue?"

Timothy nodded his head. There was no point in hiding his identity. It would help him to prominence, and Angela would hear of it, and understand. The pressman looked at him eagerly.

"We are very glad to see you back. It will be excellent news. I hope you will be playing regularly?"

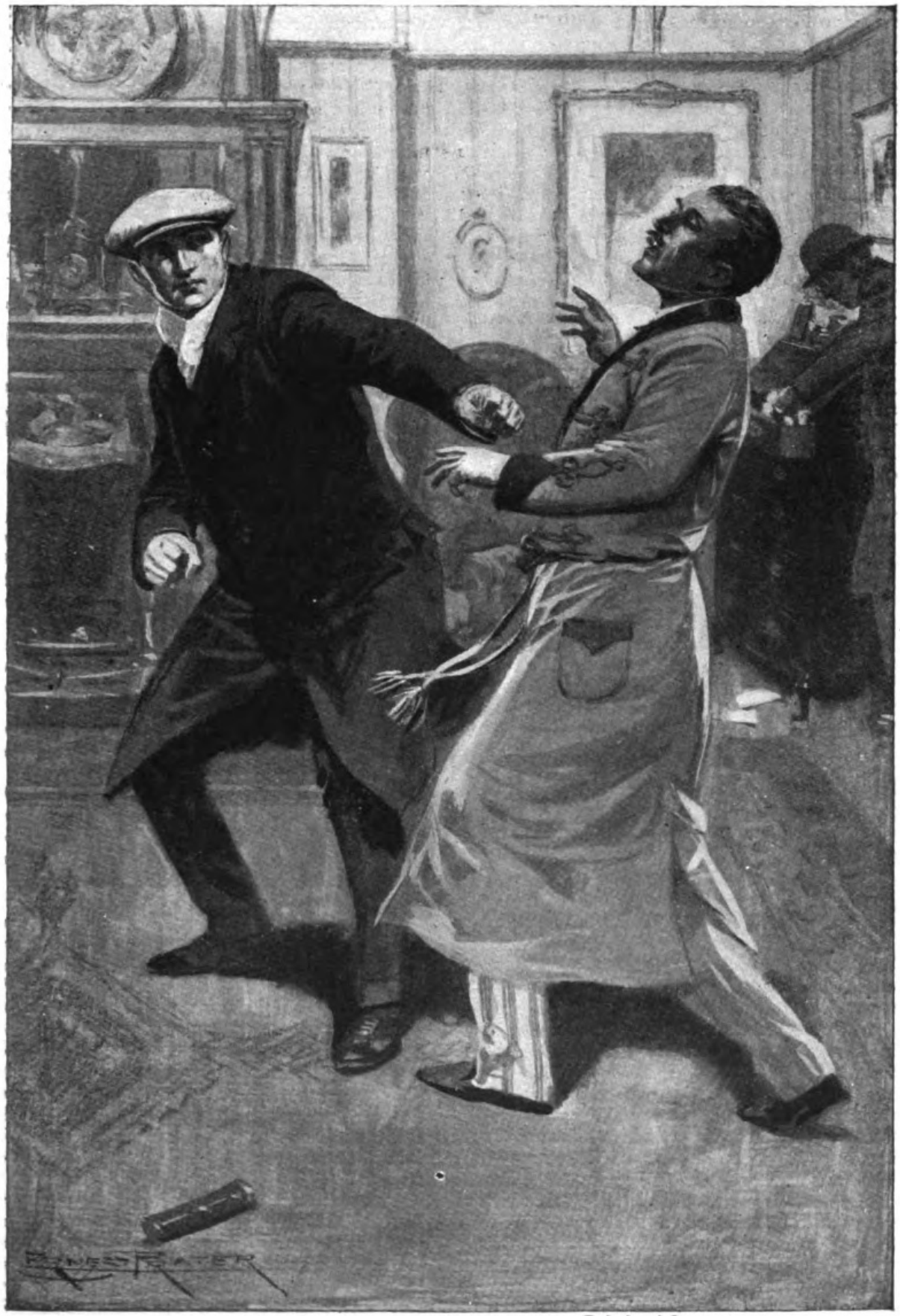
The sequel swept upon him in the form of an avalanche on the Sunday morning. He had sent out for a copy of every Sunday paper that was for sale, and when he had breakfasted he sat in his new room wrapped round by an exotic dressing-gown with all these papers strewn about his feet and a penknife in his hand.

In his heyday cuttings had not been much more to him than letters bearing compliments of the season, but when he had been cut off from Rugger they had grown by slow degrees to have that subtle charm of old associations which belongs more congruously to wild flowers gently pressed and hidden between the pages of an old-world book. Now they meant something else. They made up a photograph of the play of yesterday, and they showed exactly how much he had done in the eyes of the Rugger public to win the match for his side.

He read them all through and made them into a clean new pack, with a place left for the trump card that he must hold before he could play that last great game with Angela. And then sheer, unaffected, unadulterated glee bubbled up from somewhere around his heart, and he threw himself back in his chair and kicked first one of his slippers and then the other high up towards the ceiling over his head, and gave a wild laugh that was more like a whoop, and wrapped his dressing-gown tighter about him, rose, and began to waltz giddily round the room. He had come back. He would be picked for England. He had dropped out of the clouds bang into the middle of Rugby football and had caught up the run of the game and become a part of it all in one blessed hour. He stopped and struck one hand excitedly with the clenched fist of the other. He would go out. He would take the air. The greatest task that he had now was to keep absolutely fit. He must have no late nights. He must rise betimes. He would do exercises on the floor. As for work, the sooner he found that the better. He began to dress.

Timothy's handicap lay in some ways in the fact that he had come to the Midlands to join a club. He would have been far more at home in London, would have known far better what to do with his time. But in London there lived a man who had come upon him in Sladden's and who would remember his face. Moving, moreover, once again in his old circle, he feared that he might come upon his father, and he did

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"TIMOTHY'S FIST SWUNG OUT FROM HIS SHOULDER AND CRASHED ON THE OTHER'S JAW."

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not want to meet his father; nor did he want to be too near Angela until he could go to her carrying an All-England cap in his mouth, like a faithful dog, as his part of the bargain. For that cap meant more to him now than it had ever done before. The thoughtless promise of a girl should be her own salvation if he could only win the right to hold her to her earliest promise.

One International Trial Match had been played. Another followed before he had properly demonstrated that his form was not merely a flash in the pan. The eve of the third and last drew near. He began to read every paper with a feverish concern. Through the medium of Rugby critics, popular opinion was writing his name upon the wall, and out of the maze of argument he began to notice why. England possessed a scrum-half with the individualism of a genius, and though the selection committee had searched all over the country, like chickens scratching about a farmyard, they could not find anywhere a stand-off half who could work with him as he needed somebody to work to bring out his greatness. His name was Berridge, and he was best behind losing forwards. England were weak in forwards, but strong behind the scrum, and England wanted Berridge to get the ball from the feet of those losing forwards.

He began to notice that the two club halves who had before been accepted as England's best were passing out of favour. Writers were demanding brilliance instead of tiresome safety, and they wanted Timothy Saville to play with Berridge and see if between them they could not set up a new delight. Other men could not take more than half his passes. They believed that Timothy could take them all.

Now as the fateful days began to come and go Timothy knew no rest. He went to the banisters and peered below whenever he heard a knock that might mean the coming of a telegram. He could not read and he could not sleep. His heart was continually agog with tremulous anxiety.

At last it came. They gave it him as if it were the most ordinary telegram in the world. They didn't know. He tore open the envelope, then spun on his heel and tried to shake somebody by the hand. There was nobody there. He wanted to shout, wanted to dance. They had asked him to play for the Rest of England in the last of the Trials. And it meant he had to play with Berridge. He would have the chance of his life. And there was no way in which he could exult except to stand there and grin.

Next morning he reached out grasping arms for papers and tried to open them all at once. The first that he managed to hold out before him offered for his attention a photograph of Berridge. And whilst he stood stock-still and stared at it rigidly, the paper almost spoke to him. It seemed to say, "You recognize that man? Do you remember the man who found you stealing money from Sladden's room? You struck him down, didn't you? But for one moment your eyes met, and you remember his face, just as he will remember yours. That man was Berridge. Here he is. There is no mistake, you see. In the Trial Match you two will meet. What are you going to do?" Timothy could do nothing. The world was spinning round him. He was incredulous and his mind was one great blank.

III.

ANGELA leaned a little forward in her seat; one hand began to find its way slowly across her lap to hold the fingers of the other. It was going to be something of a thrill.

Out into the winter's sunshine were coming England and the Rest. She heard applause begin, and when it swelled quickly round the ground her heart beat a little faster; but she could not see Timothy, and until he came the thrill had not begun. She began to look quickly from group to group. Men were moving across the field to their positions. Still she could not see Timothy; something had happened. Her fingers began to twine uncertainly one about the other upon her lap.

All in a moment the world had changed. A man had come running out, a man who was late—a man—oh, it was Timothy!

Her hands moved now just as though she were going to reach out towards him. Then they fell slowly back into her lap, and her chin seemed to sink a little into her furs, until she was very still.

That was all.

To Timothy this was the most grim day in his life. Late? He had had to be late. What other possible way was there of avoiding Berridge before the game began? If he could only show Berridge first how splendidly he could combine with him, how thoroughly he understood the working of his brain, then Berridge might see that he was the only man who could play him into the England team, and perhaps he would not give him away. Perhaps he would prefer to keep him on the playing-field of Rugger.

The whistle went suddenly. Timothy was alive to it, and his eyes were set. The ball was sailing towards him. He ran in a little, waited, then sped in under it as it fell and took it cleanly, and dodged and swerved and was free to kick. He tried for touch, but England's back reached it, fumbled, and knocked on. At once the forwards

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were round and packing down. He slipped up into his place. He had to study every movement that Berridge made. Berridge was his little tin god and he was a disciple. He was up by the scrum now, darting and dodging and snatching at a ball that was only a will-o'-the-wisp until, in a flurry of speed, he had suddenly spun on his heel like a revolving top and from somewhere the ball had bounced into his hands, and his legs were being dragged from under him. As he fell he let the ball go. This was where stand-off halves had always failed him. Timothy did not fail. No one could tell how he had found the ball or how he had slung it free, but Timothy came into the picture with a burst of terrific speed and reached for it as it fell; he had taken it barely a foot from the ground and had kept his balance and his swerve, and now he was racing in line with the Rest three-quarters away up-field. He heard a roll of thunder from the touch-lines, and then he saw a man diving for his knees, and he slung the ball on. He fell and he scrambled up. He watched a great race up-field, then saw the ball rise high over the full-back's head. He ran on after the game. Somebody had cleared for England. It was touch. He came up to the line-out. His own men had the ball. It was down. They were fighting for freedom. They were dribbling up-field. A man had fallen upon it. The forwards were round again and scrumming. He moved up watchfully into position once again, and bent his eyes on Berridge. Berridge was nearly flat on his face. The ball was tight in the grip of England's men. It was going back. It was out. He saw Berridge leap round like a demon and fling himself bodily on to the man who was fumbling for it. He was just in time. The forwards were round it again and men were shouting. The game was pressing upon them. He moved up a little, ready for anything Berridge did. Now the Rest were giving way. The English forwards came through in a solid bunch, with the ball bouncing short at their toes. Berridge was down and was up again. He had skidded across their front and was nearly scalped. The ball was almost in his hands. For one second he reached it and threw it back to where Timothy should be. These were the kind of passes that nobody could ever take, and just for one moment it seemed that England would have it again. But Timothy was there. He had darted in, and out of their very hands he had won the ball and was rushing, with head down, under their stretching hands. Two great arms closed round his hips and dragged him down. As he fell a gesture that he understood jumped into view, and he slammed the ball out towards the wing, and Berridge was there and took it with one hand, and was bursting through, with a wing three-quarter striding alongside and shouting for the ball.

Afterwards how the game went scarcely seemed to matter. Timothy knew only that this was triumph. All that Berridge did of his genius was fraught with witchcraft, but Timothy was uncanny with understanding. They were two men each with a twin conception of the other's play.

Again and again that wild, dishevelled figure broke away through a tangle of bodies, and each time he came out into the open Timothy strove with all his might to get to the place where he would send his pass, and in this one thing never failed. Always he flew past and took the ball as he went. Tries were not easy. Twice he made clear openings for another man to score. On the verge of half-time an England wing three-quarter intercepted a pass, and came away with a rush and a wild cheer urging him on. Timothy swooped down into his path with the speed of a stag and swung round his knees. That brought half-time.

He stood up wearily and his hands slipped into the pockets of his shorts, and there he was waiting in isolation when it happened. A footstep had sounded beside him, and he turned on his heel. It was Berridge, and he was looking him searchingly in the face. There was a queer, half-dubious questioning in the look that Berridge had in his eyes, and Timothy understood what lay behind it. Neither moved. More than anything Timothy wanted to say, "It isn't a bit of use your shoving me into clink. You'll never play for England unless you have me with you. Don't you understand?"

Yet the strain of that silence held for something like thirty seconds before at last Berridge said, "Look here. Haven't I——?"

Timothy turned on his heel.

"They're starting again," he said. He began to walk away. Berridge stayed, looking after him.

Timothy looked up into the skies. The sun was being hidden by slowly gathering clouds; there was a hint of rain in the air. He was suddenly filled with a new depression. Berridge remembered, and he was not going to hold his tongue. He could not see what it would be best to do. Next moment play had re-started, and now England began to assert their superiority. The Rest could not get the ball in the scrum. England bustled them all ways in the loose. Berridge was trampled on and smothered and collared round the face. For a little while he seemed unexpectedly off his game. Timothy knew it and began to exert his influence. He came up a little closer and called to him now and again as if in friendliness. He bent this way

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and that for a sight of the ball and crouched for his spring when England had it. Now and again he turned as if in fear that his own three-quarters were not far enough up. The centres seemed to be tiring a little. Twice England went through at full speed and scored. The sky grew grey and more grey. A drizzle began to fall. For one short spell Timothy's heart forsook him. No matter how great a game he played now, Berridge was not going to care. He was going to give him away.

Then suddenly all things changed. Berridge had reeled out into the open with the ball, and England were closing in upon him. He was making despairingly for the wing. Timothy understood. He sprinted inside him at his top speed. On the edge of the touch-line Berridge swerved, ducked, and gave him the ball with a bang, and Timothy cut through a jumble of men and was out in the open and racing for the line. He heard the pounding of feet behind him, and strove with all his might to increase his speed. The pounding grew nearer; a hand reached out and settled upon his hip; he felt himself going down. Then a shout came at him from the wing, and he threw the ball to the sound of that voice. Berridge took it high in the air and cut in again towards the goal. Timothy hurtled into the mud and slid for a distance of seven yards, and then in one movement was up again on his toes and was sprinting across to the wing. Berridge was almost up to the back. If he had any Rugger genius at all he would kick across and Timothy would come under the ball and gather it. Berridge was true to himself. He kicked, not over the full-back's head but high across to the wing with perfect timing, and Timothy came to it as it bounced knee-high and took it across the line without once faltering in his speed.

That was the try of the match and England sought revenge. Again and again their forwards came down the field and were almost through, and every time Berridge and Timothy together swept like a gust of wind boldly across their front and cleared. The drizzle turned into rain and the ball grew greasy. To Timothy this made no difference. He never missed a pass. But towards the end England spread in battle array before the Rest of England's goal-line and fought for a way to win. It was no use. England's halves were beaten and Berridge came into his element. Beaten forwards made him supreme. He would not be trampled on. He would not be swept aside. Whoever got hold of the ball and loosed it seemed to sling it immediately into the arms of Berridge. He never waited for opportunities. He went out in search of the ball, and made his own.

The last thing Timothy ever remembered of the game was the gathering darkness and the rain, and Berridge diving towards the muddy ball and fighting his way out with it solely to give it to Timothy; then his own grim sprinting along the slippery mud; and finally his last great tackle that saved a certain try.

The end came suddenly. England were scrumming upon the five-yards' mark and had won the ball. Their forwards held it and wheeled. Out of the ruck came Timothy like a man amok and met the ball once with his face and once with his foot. High over head it went and fell with every daintiness into touch, and the referee watched it with a humorous eye.

"There I think we will leave it," said he, and blew the fanfare of no-side proudly upon his whistle. All round the field of play the dark masses of the crowd rose up then and were cheering. Timothy looked round them and thought that he understood. They were cheering Berridge. Some of them were. But one, a little lady in furs, was cheering *him*.

He walked away solemnly off the field. His heart was all athrob and he seemed all the time to hear the footstep of Berridge on his track. He felt once or twice as though the hand of the law had reached out in the person of Berridge and was tapping him on the shoulder with a view to running him in. At last in the changing-room he sat down wearily and leaned forward over his knees to wonder. So he was sitting when Berridge came at last slowly towards him and stood by his side and waited. At last he looked up and met Berridge squarely with unwinking eyes. Berridge was muddy and bruised and tousled and was tired, but he looked, despite all this dishevelment, peculiarly stern.

"I've met you before," said he.

Timothy never moved.

"I met you at Sladden's house. The night when you——"

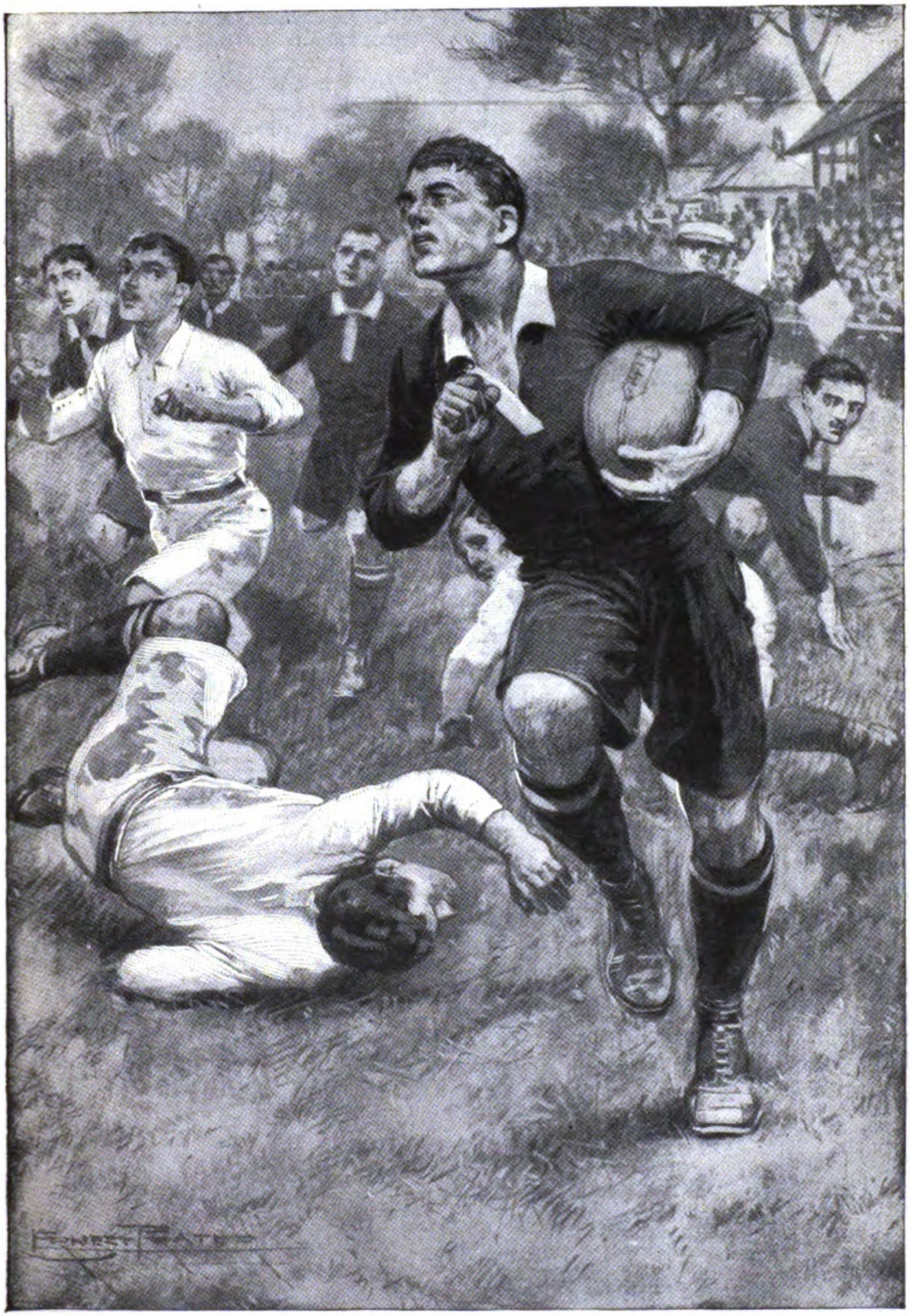
"What if I did?" said Timothy, and suddenly stood to his feet. "What is it, anyway, to you?"

"Nothing," said Berridge. 'Only I'd like to know why the devil you hit me so hard. I couldn't eat for days."

Timothy gave no sign of understanding.

"It wasn't my business how you got in, or why," said Berridge; "but your plans clashed badly with mine. Perhaps you knew Sladden. Sladden was a thief, of course. He cheated at cards. He was a swindler. But he was the most delightful company I ever knew, and that kept people from finding it out until it was too late. He swindled me badly whilst I was staying in his house, and I went down that night to get back an I.O.U. that I'd given him before I found that out.

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"BERRIDGE GAVE HIM THE BALL, AND TIMOTHY CUT THROUGH A JUMBLE OF MEN AND WAS OUT IN THE OPEN AND RACING FOR THE LINE."

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You were just coming in, and you weren't very sporting. You hit me under the chin."

Timothy had reached out a hand and was resting it on Berridge's shoulder. "I'd very much like to hit you back," said Berridge, "one of these days, because when I first came to I'd nearly forgotten what it was I'd come for, and I only just had time to snaffle my bit of paper quickly and lay back again on the floor before Sladden came in and found me. He found me down and out, of course, and his money and some of his papers gone. I told him I'd heard a noise and had come down. I had a bruise on my chin to prove what had happened, too, and then I said: 'You must have swindled a good many people in your time, you know. Do fellows break into your house and take their money back every night of the week?'"

Timothy spoke at last.

'He was engaged."

"Yes," said Berridge, "I know her. It was a rotten business. He captured her by his manners, of course. I think she was lonely and he was clever in everything that he did, and good at every game. He wanted to marry her all in a rush and take her abroad, but something happened. I don't know what it was. She suddenly seemed almost as though there was somebody else. She wouldn't go with him, and so in the end he went alone. I should say that if he hadn't gone pretty quick, somebody would have put out his light; and he took her ring with him, too."

He began to strip. 'I'm sorry you hit me like you did," he said again. 'It was so jolly unnecessary."

'I didn't know," said Timothy. "I'm sorry, too."

He waited a minute as if he hoped Berridge would speak again. Berridge did. He was wandering towards the baths, and the last thing he said was: "Where the devil are those confounded towels?"

"There's a lady outside, Saville," said the grey-haired autocrat. "She's been waiting for you for some time. I didn't know whether you knew."

Timothy looked up with a start. "Thank you," said he; and stood for a moment perfectly still. At last he began to walk towards the door. He went out of the room and into the gangway where the wind blew cold, and the drizzle had sent a filmy mist. A girl in furs was standing alone beside the grand stand and she turned to him. He looked at her very closely and then he held out his hands.

"I wondered if you would come," he said. "But I didn't dare to look for you. No one will know till Monday, you see, whether I'll get my cap, and I——"

She took his hands slowly and began to smile up at him with a touch of sadness.

"I couldn't wait till Monday," said she.

He was still holding her hands. It was a wondrous feeling.

"If I were to get my cap," said he, "would you keep your promise?"

For a moment she made no answer. And then quite suddenly her hand was upon his sleeve.

"Timothy," said she, and her voice was a little breathless, "there isn't any *if*. You'll *have* to get your cap. You've *got* to."

He did not leave go of her hands until at last he heard somebody coming.

You have seen the chosen team. Did you notice the half-backs? That cutting from the *Sportsman* has completed the pack of cards.

Short Story Competition.

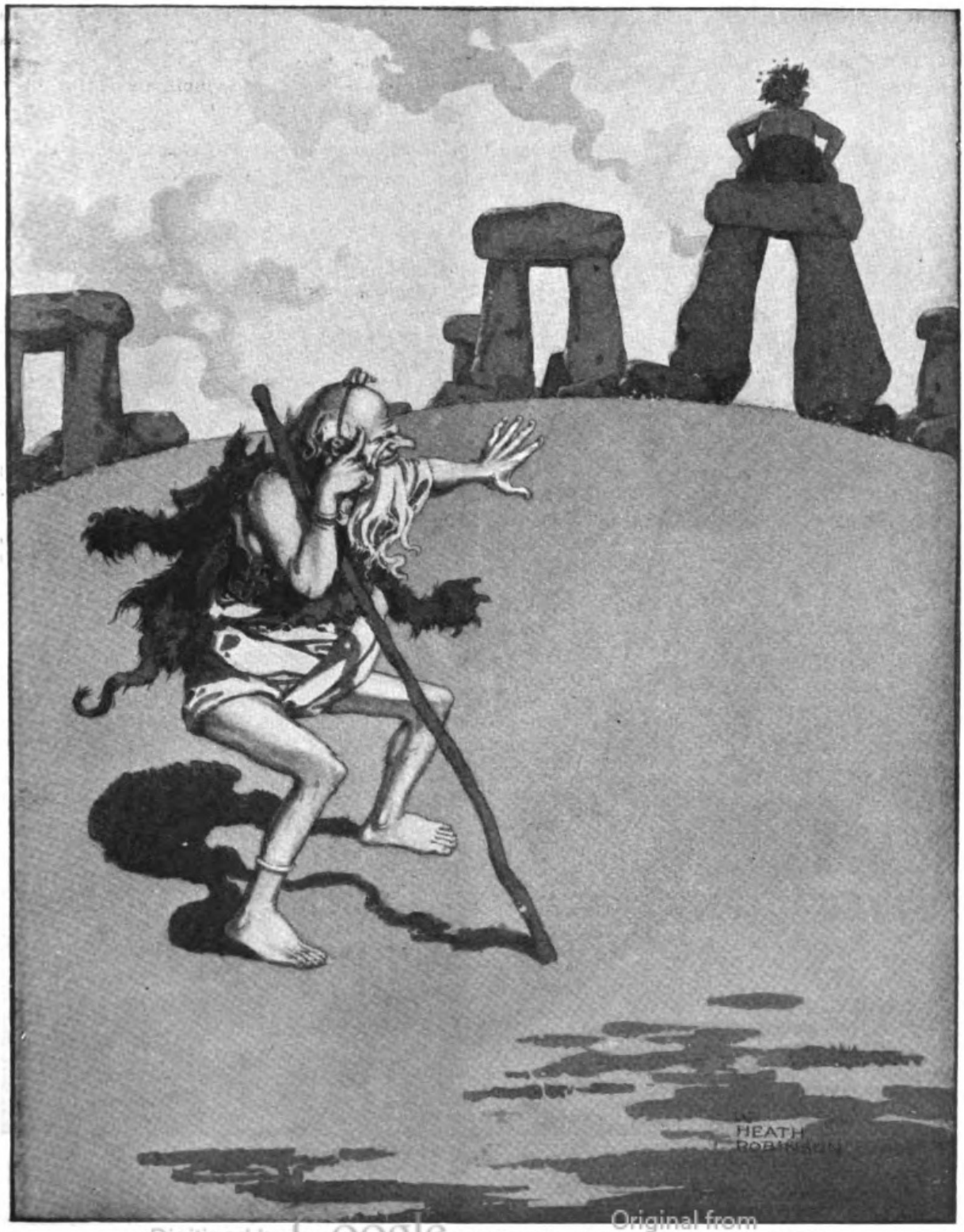
The result of this Competition will be announced in our next number.

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"My Funniest Pictures."

By W. HEATH ROBINSON.

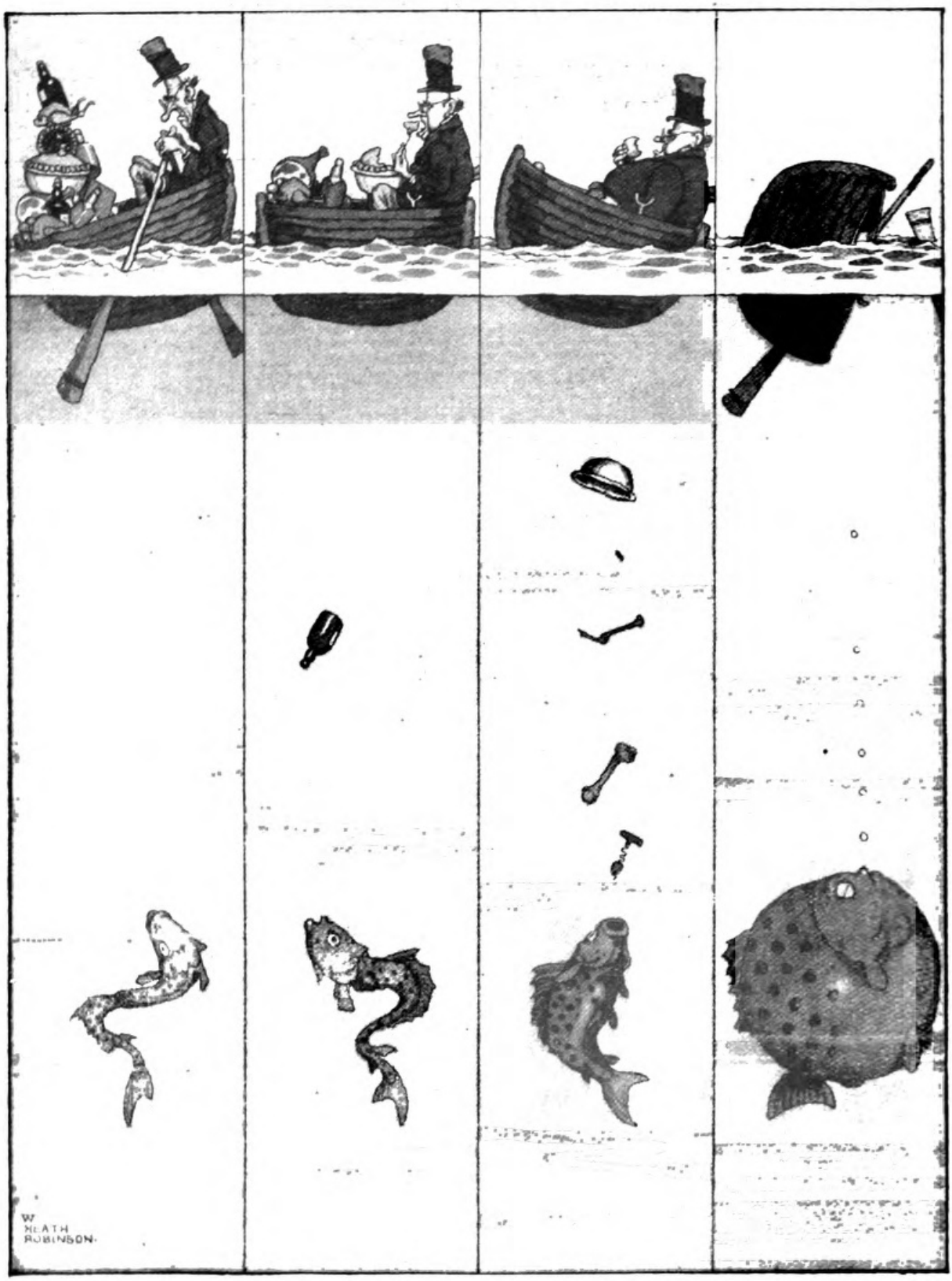
These drawings have been selected by the artist himself as the funniest he has ever done. Do you agree?



HOW THE INVENTOR OF TROUSERS FIRST GOT THE IDEA.

By kind permission of "The Bystander."

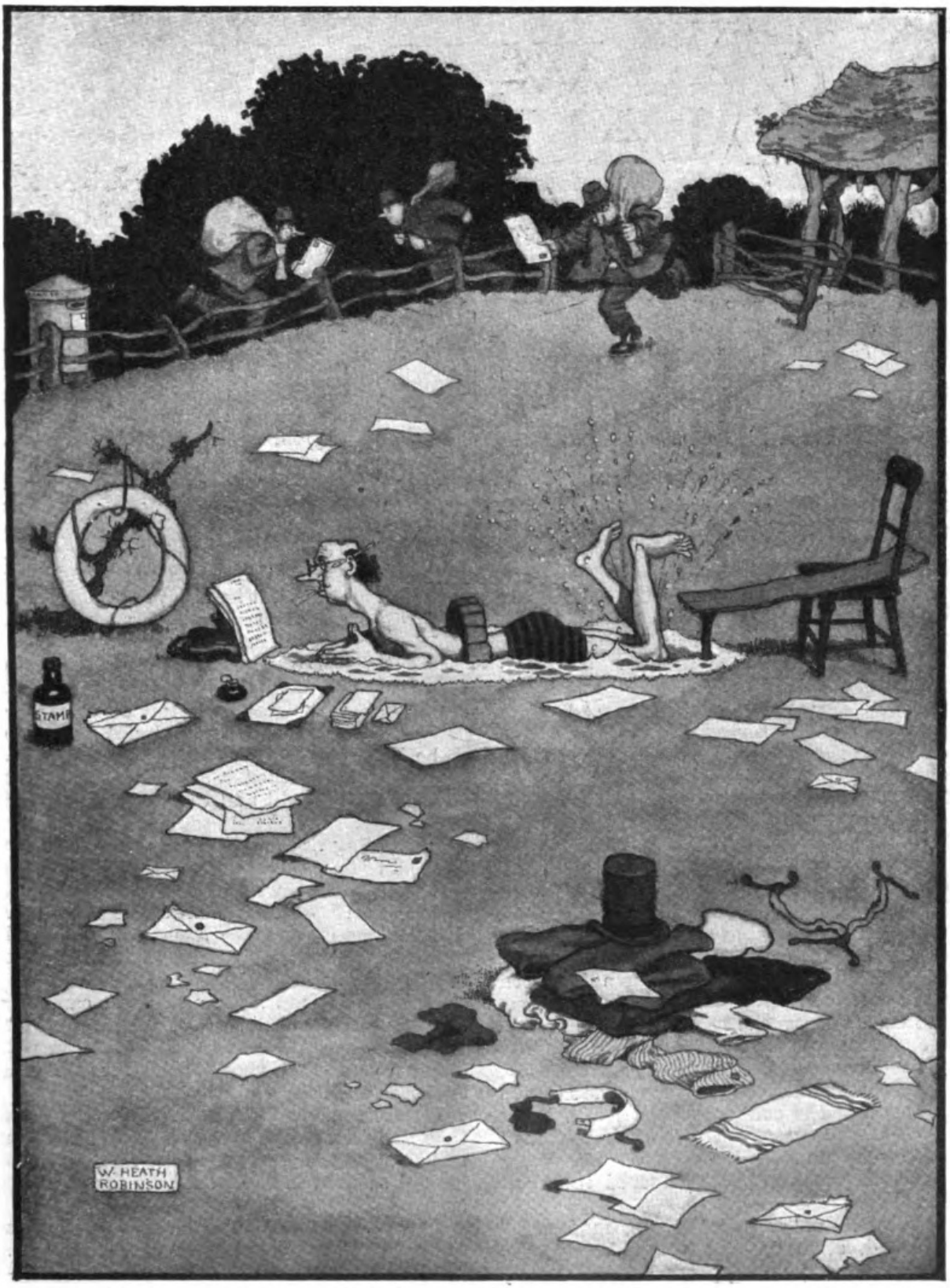
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THE SHIFTING OF THE BALLAST.

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A STUDENT OF THE SWIMMING CORRESPONDENCE COLLEGE TAKING THE FIRST COURSE.

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WHO LAUGHED LAST?

By MARY STUART BOYD

ILLUSTRATED BY W. E. WEBSTER

I.

WHEN he had leisure to remember, it struck Tony Bickman as curious that the episode, which so narrowly escaped wrecking his marital happiness should have occurred in a No. 13 bus.

He and his wife had entered the bus on the best of terms—at least, so Tony believed at the time; though later he recalled uneasily that Clare had been quieter even than usual, after the little incident at dinner when he had convulsed the company by one of the trifling jokes that he loved to point at her.

It was Clare's birthday, too, her twenty-fourth birthday. He had got in a little bit of fun in the morning by pretending to have forgotten the anniversary. But though Clare had been downcast about that she had quite cheered up when he gave her the costly bead hand-bag he had bought for her, and showed the seats he had got for a play at night.

In the bus, wherein they had to travel theatrewards, because no taxi was to be had, the matter causing disagreement had been of the slightest. When the conductor came in to collect fares, the happy thought flashed on our hero to take a rise out of his wife by pretending to be travelling alone. So, gazing absent-mindedly into space, he affected ignorance of the conductor's presence.

"Will you pay, dear?" Mrs. Bickman said, gently nudging his elbow.

Affecting to start, Tony stared round at his wife.

"Why should I pay for you, madam?" he asked, severely. "I don't know you. I've never seen you before. One to Piccadilly Circus, conductor."

Blushing furiously under the interested gaze of the other passengers, Mrs. Bickman opened the beaded bag and, taking out her purse, paid her threepence; the while Tony maintained a gravely-virtuous exterior, though secretly laughing "way down in his stummick," like Brer Rabbit.

When the bus stopped at the Circus, Tony, who was sitting the nearer the door, got out and waited on the kerb for his wife to join him. A little crowd of intending passengers was waiting and, in the petty confusion of exit, he failed to notice that his wife had kept her seat. When Tony realized that he was alone, and would have re-entered the vehicle, it had moved on, and was already separated from him by a mass of traffic.

Deciding that Clare was certain to alight when the bus next stopped, at the top of the Haymarket, Tony hastened there, to be held up by a stream of conveyances. When he reached the corner, the bus was out of sight and there was no sign of his wife.

Arguing that, having missed him, Clare would be certain to make for the theatre, Tony went there, and waited at the front entrance until the audience had gone in, and the hush that followed the close of the overture indicated that the curtain had risen.

"If Clare wants to be nasty, she can," he told himself pettishly. (Did we record that Tony was a spoiled only child?) "I'm not going to miss a good show because she chooses to get into a huff."

Leaving instructions with the attendants that, should a lady come, she was to be shown to his vacant seat, Tony went to the places he had secured in the front row of the dress circle.

The piece was a musical comedy—a class of entertainment Tony specially affected. His favourite comedian was excelling himself, to judge from the roars of laughter, yet Tony felt out of tune. His usually high spirits had sunk to zero. When he remembered where he was he laughed spasmodically, but the empty seat beside him kept suggesting

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the missing Clare, and conjectures as to where she had gone obsessed his thoughts.

Early in the last act he left his place and hastened from the theatre. There was no chance of her joining him now. She must have gone back to the boarding-house in Fitzgeorge's Gardens, where they lived. He would find her there, probably already repentant. Though Tony still thought it too bad of his wife to have wantonly spoiled their outing, he magnanimously resolved to forgive her.

As Tony journeyed Hampstead-wards the thought of his practical joke troubled him a little. He remembered, too late, that it would have been different had the people in the bus known their actual relations to each other. Then they would have seen the humour of the situation, and joined in the fun, as they had done when he got off his little jest at dinner.

And yet, at dinner, where all the other guests were familiar, he had thought for a moment that his playful sally had offended his wife. And what was it to have taken offence at? A nothing! Clare, who was naturally a shy, reserved being, had, for once, been talking animatedly, and remarking on her loquacity, Tony had asked the company to credit that for a whole year after their marriage he hadn't spoken to his wife. When the reason of this strange reticence was demanded, Tony had replied tersely, "Because I didn't want to interrupt her!"

He had gloried in the applause that followed. Somebody had said he really ought to send *that* to *Punch*. He still thought it a capital joke, though, in strict honesty, he could not claim it as original—one that no woman with a sense of humour would ever have taken exception to. If Clare hadn't been cursed with a super-sensitive temperament, she would have joined in the laugh against herself, and been proud of her husband's reputation as a wit.

Tony was not a man to cherish malice. He resolved to pardon a wife who, he guessed, had quickly repented her rash act. Letting himself in with his latchkey he went up to their room, assured of finding Clare there, only to find it empty.

Slipping downstairs he glanced into the sitting-rooms. In the drawing-rooms the quartettes engrossed in playing auction-bridge failed to notice his untimely return. In a smaller sitting-room some old ladies nodded over novels, and a spinster was knitting a jumper. It was evident that wherever Clare might be, she was not in the house.

Under that conviction Tony ceased being magnanimous, and became uneasy. Where could she have gone at that hour alone, and in evening dress? It could only have been to some confidential friend. Clare was not a woman who made facile friendships—the kind that are easily broken. Until her marriage she had lived in Winchester, and her one chum in London had been his own cousin, Greta Grinling, with whom she had been at school.

Greta, who was an artist, had a studio in Chelsea. She was opinionative and outspoken. Tony had a sneaking respect for his cousin because she had soundly boxed his ears when, as a mischievous child, he had attempted to play tricks on her. And she had never at any time hesitated to tell Tony exactly what she thought of him. She was the very antithesis of the gentle, shrinking Clare, who was three years her junior. The warm comradeship existing between the two women never ceased to be a marvel to Tony, who knew how different they were in nature. It was with Greta, then, that he expected to find his missing wife.

Midnight had struck when Tony reached the door of No. 3B, Frampton Studios, Chelsea, to find all within dark and still. He knocked, at first gently, then more and more emphatically. Sounds inside rewarded his fifth summons. Then a light showed through the glass of the door, and a feminine voice, which vainly attempted to attain a masculine depth, demanded to know who was there.

"It's me," Tony replied. "I've come to take Clare home."

"Clare?"

At the word, the key turned in the lock, a bolt was withdrawn, the door opened, and Greta stood revealed, clad in a kimono, her bare feet in woolly slippers, her russet hair unbound.

"Clare? What about Clare?" she asked, impatiently.

"Why—isn't Clare here?"

"Here! At this hour of night! What has happened, Tony? For heaven's sake, come in and tell me. And speak low. We mustn't disturb everybody."

"But isn't Clare here? I made sure she'd come to you," Tony could only repeat foolishly, as he followed her indoors.

"She's not in this house. You can see that for yourself," Greta retorted. And indeed he could. From the little hall he had a glimpse of a bedroom with tumbled garments on a chair, and a bed that had evidently just been in occupation. In the studio the fire was dying out, and one empty coffee cup stood on a table.

"Now, Tony, sit down and tell me what has happened. Surely nothing is wrong with Clare that you come here at this hour looking for her?"

"Well, it seems absurd to tell it, but Clare chose to get into a huff with me when we were on our way to the theatre to-night, and

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left me to go there alone. It was her birthday treat, too, and I had got splendid seats."

"But, surely, it wasn't like Clare to take offence. She is really the most long-suffering of mortals. What was it about?"

"Oh, just an innocent little joke of mine. You know my way. We were in a bus—couldn't get a taxi—and, just for a lark, y'know, I refused to pay her fare, pretended she didn't belong to me."

"But—I don't understand—did Clare ask you to pay it?"

"Yes. I said I had never seen her before."

To its perpetrator the jest still seemed a clever one, but if Tony expected Greta to be amused he was disappointed.

"Do you mean that you insulted a timid, shrinking little thing like Clare, in the face of a bus full of people, by suggesting that she was a frivolous woman?" Greta demanded, hotly.

Tony was scarlet.

"I never did anything of the kind!"

"Pardon me, but you must have done so. You say that when Clare asked you to pay her fare you refused, on the pretext that you didn't know her. What was that but exposing her as an adventuress to a lot of strangers? And you know how sensitive poor Clare is. Indeed, Tony, though I'm your cousin and not hers, I never understood how she accepted you. And since she did marry you, I've never understood how she lives with you!"

"Oh, I say, Greta, come off. I'm not such a bad chap as all that. It's just Clare's lack of humour."

"Because your cheap buffoonery fails to convulse her, you have the insolence to attribute it to her having no sense of humour! Ideas of what constitute humour differ, you know; we don't all consider practical jokes and rude personalities humour." Greta was standing upright and accusing before her subdued cousin. With her flowing robes and unbound hair she looked like some avenging fury. "Clare has a pretty wit of her own. When we were at school, though she was the youngest of the lot, her essays were always far the brightest, and she was full of fun. Now the poor dear is afraid to open her mouth before you, for you're always trying to make her a butt for your clumsy tomfoolery."

"But, Greta, I'm sure I'm not so much to blame. I never meant to hurt her. Anybody but Clare would have understood that it was just my way, and made allowances. I'm sure I——"

"Oh, you can't stay here all night proclaiming your own blameless perfection. I've got my reputation as a spinster to consider. So I wish you good-night."

"But, Greta—I can't get back to Hampstead at this hour. The Tubes will be off. And the taximen won't want to go so far."

"Take one taxi to Charing Cross, and another from there to Fitzgeorge's Gardens. That'll do the trick."

"But when I get there I don't know how to explain Clare not being with me," said poor Tony.

"That will give you a genuine opportunity of exercising your power of invention. But if you don't want to face the music, there are plenty of hotels in London. Good-night, Tony.

"I must confess I'm sorry for you, Tony. Even though I think you've only got what was coming to you," she added more kindly, as he moved ruefully towards the door. "Don't do anything hasty. It might be wiser not to take anybody into your confidence. If Clare doesn't let you know where she is by morning, I'm pretty sure to hear from her."

After Greta had watched her cousin slowly descend the dark stair, striking matches to light his way as he went, she re-entered her flat and shut and locked the door. Then, passing through the studio, which was built out at the back, she drew aside the curtains and opened the French window that led to the balcony.

"You can come in now, Clare. Your tyrant has gone." And Mrs. Tony, warmly muffled in her fur coat, her fair head wrapped in a scarf, leaving her place of hiding, came into the studio.

"What did he say?" she asked, eagerly.

"Oh, just what might have been expected, my dear. Tony is jolly sorry for himself and terribly upset for fear of being ridiculed. All the same, he still thinks himself a mighty fine fellow, with a grievance against you."

"It *is* too bad, Greta; I can't help thinking I was too severe. I know Tony's joking way so well that I ought to have made allowances for him. If it hadn't been for my promise to you, I'd have rushed in to tell him so when I knew he was in the studio."

"Sit there, my dear, and we'll thrash this out," Greta ordered, pushing her contrite cousin on to the divan. "Do you imagine that I'm going to imperil my immortal soul by telling white lies, in the attempt to bring Tony to a sense of sin, if you go back on me by forgiving him before even he realizes that he needs forgiveness?"

"But, Greta, dear, it was simply Tony's idea of fun. He never meant to annoy me. You know he dearly loves a joke."

"He does. But it must be one at somebody else's expense. Tony forgets that 'he laughs best who laughs last'; and you and I are going to be the ones who laugh last this time."

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"'ISN'T CLARE HERE? I MADE SURE SHE'D COME TO YOU,' TONY REPEATED."

But what will the people at the boarding-house think if I stay away? They are sure to think it strange."

"Their opinion can't harm you and a little wholesome criticism won't do your precious husband any harm. But Tony

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is far too afraid of ridicule to let anybody guess that one of his brilliant jokes has got addled. Besides, I hinted that I'd be likely to have news of you. So you may count on his coming back here soon."

"Well, but Greta, poor Tony——"

"Oh, bother. I'm sick of you both. Good-night. You're not worth losing my beauty-sleep for."

"Greta," Clare, who had risen, turned wistful, tear-filled eyes on her domineering hostess, "you don't think Tony will do anything rash—do you?"

A quizzical smile chased away Greta's frown. "Oh, you men-spoilers!" she exclaimed. "No, most emphatically no, you dear silly thing. I think I can confidently promise that Tony won't damage his priceless self, if that's the trouble. Now—off to bed with you."

II.

Tony passed a ghastly night at a hotel where he succeeded in getting a room, after having made vain application to two others. He was wretched without his vestments of the night, and the bed was chilly and comfortless. He wished he had asked for a fire; even a hot-water jar might have modified his misery, but when he rang his bell with the intention of ordering one, nobody answered.

After having breakfasted he drove out to Fitzgeorge's Gardens and changed into day clothes. Inquiries as to their absence during the previous night he met by saying that, after the play they had gone to Chelsea to sup at his cousin's studio, and then, finding it too late to return, they had slept there. He said it was quite possible they might remain absent another night, but promised to telephone later.

A forlorn hope that a letter from Clare might await him at the office having been disappointed, Tony gave instructions, and dictated his correspondence in a gloomy, subdued manner that made his clerks apprehensive lest their voluble master might be ill. Unwilling to face his club, where he had a reputation for iollity to sustain, Tony lunched dismally at a restaurant. Four o'clock found him free for the day. Regarding his cousin's quarters as the sole place where there was any likelihood of getting news of his wife, he hurried to Chelsea.

When Greta opened the door he was taken aback to see that she was dressed to go out.

"Sorry, Tony, but I must go out. I can only ask you in while I put on my gloves."

"Any news of Clare?" he asked, breathlessly, following her into the studio.

"There's been nothing by post," Greta made truthful reply. "Have you had no word?"

Tony shook his head dolefully. All his cheery assurance had vanished. "I'm afraid she's gone for good. I wish I hadn't been such an unutterable ass. I thought it amused her. I wish I'd known that she was so sensitive. I'd never——"

"Too late now, I'm afraid, Tony," Greta said, briskly. "I'm sorry for you, but when a gentle, long-suffering woman turns, it isn't a mouthful of fair words that'll bring her round. In my worthless opinion, if you see Clare back within a month you may count yourself a lucky man."

Tony groaned. Since his pampered boyhood, when Greta had been the only relative who told him facts, he had faith in the opinion of his outspoken cousin.

"If I could only see Clare, to tell her that I never meant to offend her. She can't possibly think worse of me than I do of myself. If she'll only take me on again I'll give up being a silly fool. I'll—I'll eat worms. I'll do *anything*."

"I do hope Clare doesn't hear him," Greta thought. "If she does she'll give in at once, and that'll spoil everything."

"Well, Tony, a little while of sitting on the stool of repentance won't do you any harm. Now I must go, for I've an appointment. I'm sorry to be obliged to evict you."

Tony, who had been moving restlessly on the divan, rose abruptly to his feet, knocking one of its many cushions to the floor. As Greta had left the studio, she did not see his expression change as he hastily replaced it.

"Come along, Tony. I'm in a hurry," she called impatiently from the hall.

"Can't I wait here a minute and rest?" he asked, plaintively. "I'm quite fagged out with all this worry. I didn't sleep a wink last night. My bed was iced; and I hadn't even a tooth-brush with me."

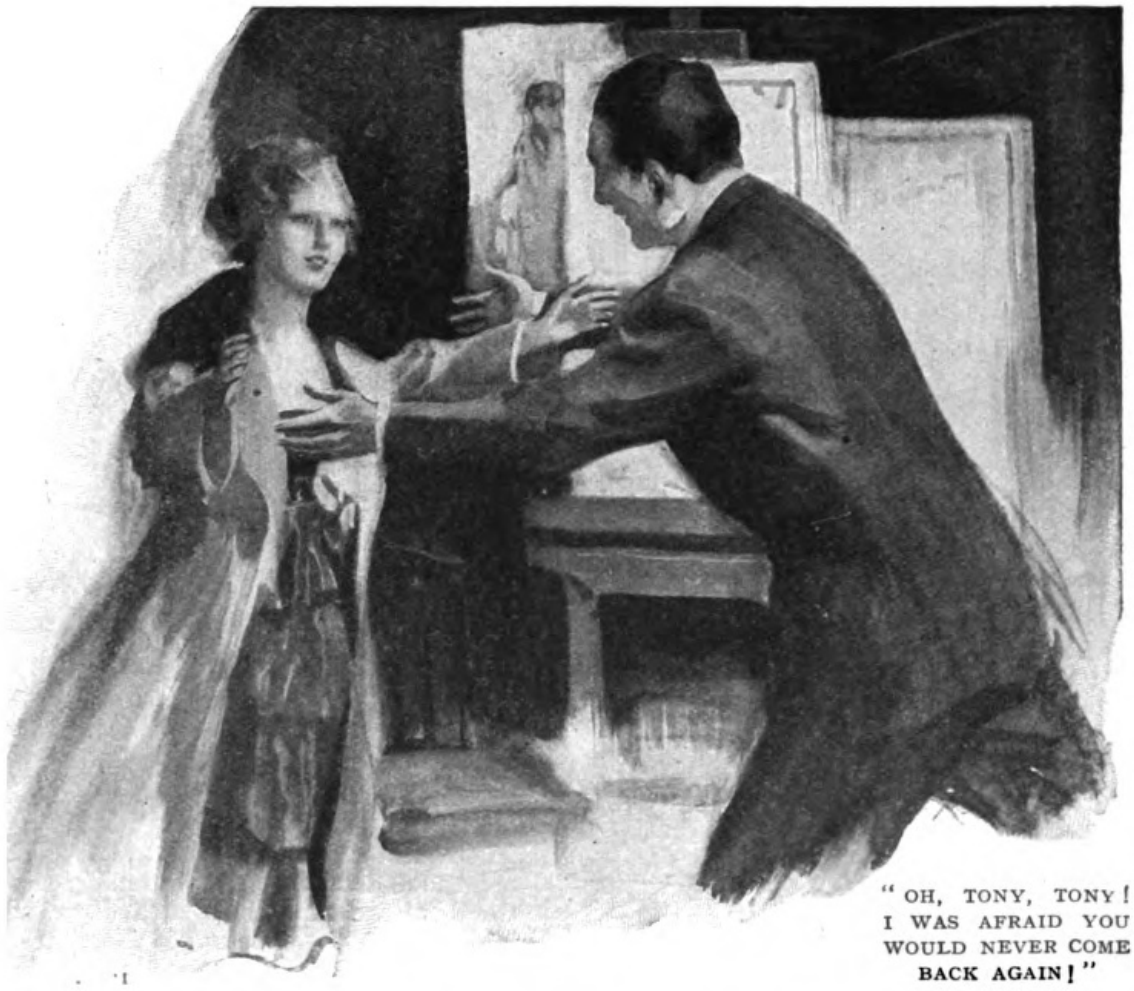
"Sorry, Tony, but I can't leave you." Greta was inexorable. "You'd be committing suicide or something nasty. Sullying my fair fame, and making a mess of my nice studio. Come along."

With apparent reluctance Tony obeyed. Presenting an outward aspect of the deepest melancholy, he allowed himself to be escorted to the entrance to the Tube station, under the viligant eye of his self-constituted guardian. Greta did not guess that the moment she had turned the corner he emerged and, with a new alertness in his bearing, hastened back in the direction of Frampton Studios. Three minutes later found him hammering at the door of No. 3B.

Listening intently, Tony thought he heard a movement in the hall, but the door remained closed.

"Clare, Clare!" he breathed through the open slit of the letter-box. "Let me speak to you, darling. I'm broken-hearted. I'm kicking myself to pieces. Only let me in."

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"OH, TONY, TONY! I WAS AFRAID YOU WOULD NEVER COME BACK AGAIN!"

There was a rustle and the sound of a muffled sob within. Then the door opened, disclosing a Clare who smiled through her tears.

"*Clare!*"

"Oh, Tony, Tony! I knew Greta had sent you away, and I was afraid you would never come back again!" she cried, throwing herself into his arms.

"I'm afraid I've broken my word to Greta. She made me promise not to see you until she allowed me," Clare said, a little later, after Tony had eaten humble pie, and had received speedy absolution.

"Greta's a tyrant. I defy her and all her works," Tony declared valiantly. They were sitting on the divan in the studio, and Clare's head rested contentedly on his shoulder. "Still, she's right. I have been a bally ass. After this, I pledge my honour, I'll behave just like other men."

"I'm afraid I shall find you dull if you do, Tony. But how did you guess I was here? I'm sure Greta never let the secret out, and I kept as quiet as a mouse."

For answer Tony put his hand under the cushions and drew out the beaded bag. Clare seized it with a cry of joy. "My precious birthday bag that you gave me! I thought I had lost it. I must have thrown it down there when I came in."

"Yes. It was finding the bag gave the show away. Greta had been grilling me over a fire of red-hot words. I almost thought I'd lost you for good, but discovering it gave me hope."

"I wonder what Greta will say when she finds us friends again?"

"I know what she'll say," cried Tony, starting up, "and we'd better not wait to hear it. We'd be wise to hook it before she gets within talking distance. Shall we?"

"Oh, let's," murmured Clare.

Half an hour later Greta returned to find her refugee gone. On the studio table, beside a plate containing a scrap of canvas and some dust from the fire, was a paper bearing a message in Tony's writing:—

"I've worn this on my head in token of utter abasement and Clare has forgiven me. So you must forgive us both, and dine with us to-morrow night to tell us so."

Greta sniffed scornfully, as she threw Tony's substitutes for sackcloth and ashes into the fire.

"He'll be as bad as ever in a week. Well, I did my best. But I'm afraid it was Tony who laughed last!"

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G. BERNARD SHAW Disbelieve in *Here are*

INTERVIEWS BY

I.

G. BERNARD SHAW.

I ASKED Mr. George Bernard Shaw whether he had ever investigated at first hand the claims of spiritualism.

"The first ouija-board that came to Ireland was my mother's," he said. "She was always having communion with the dead. Naturally she took it quite seriously, although she was a wise and well-balanced woman. I worked with that ouija-board constantly—or played with it—until it became a deadly bore. It usually does in about a week. Such rank nonsense as it gives off! Any child could write more amusing stuff. If the dead are capable of such utter drivel, it is indecent to encourage them to do it. No, I've looked into the subject in other ways—and it doesn't in the least interest me."

"Have you ever attended a spiritualist séance?" I asked.

"I never go to one because I will not promise not to cheat," he replied. "Of course, to cheat at a spiritualist séance is the only way to test its worth. If there are spirits and they have a modicum of sense, they will see through the deception, and by exposing it give a triumphant demonstration both of their existence and of a higher degree of the critical faculty than most believers in mediums possess. A sharp young American newspaper-man once asked a spiritualist medium to get him in touch with his 'dear dead friend, Herbert George Wells, who used to write for a living.' He had quite an interesting talk—through the medium—with the spirit of H. G. Wells on what heaven was like. Well, if I went to a séance I should do as that American did—cheat. That's why I get so few invitations to attend these confabs with the 'dead.'"

"Many people find comfort in what the spiritualists picture," I suggested.

"To me it adds a new terror to death. What an awful idea! To think that, instead of decently resting, the poor dead must spend their time tipping little tables and

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and H.G.WELLS

Spiritualism

their Reasons



JOSEPH GOLLOMB.

ringing bells to satisfy the foolish people they have left behind them in the world! It would be equally terrifying to me to be inflicted with the sort of messages the dead send through the mediums. Life is complicated and confusing enough as it is. I feel exactly as did a friend of mine whose wife's sister was dying. The woman believed in spiritualism. He said to her :—

" ' If you should die and find that there is a heaven ; and if you should find that in some way or other you can communicate with me, I want you to promise me on your word of honour that you will do no such thing ! '

" She promised. But she got well, and went to live in India. Later she died. And now he is terrified at the thought that she may forget her promise."

I told Mr. Shaw a story Sir William Barrett, the famous scientist and spiritualist, told me about how he had fooled Moncure Conway with the coin trick, and the reason he did it.

I had mentioned to Sir William what H. G. Wells had said, as told later, about men of science being gullible in matters outside their speciality.

" Ah, yes ! " exclaimed Sir William, as one does at meeting a familiar argument. " That's exactly what Moncure Conway said to me when I told him of some of the cases on which I based my belief in telepathy.

" ' You're easily fooled on such things,' he said.

" ' Are you ? ' I demanded.

" ' I don't think so,' he replied.

" ' All right, then,' I said. ' I'll prove telepathy to you now.' I made him get a handful of coins, and, without my seeing any of them, I made him put them into a hat. Again without looking, I put my hand in the hat and shook the coins. ' Now take one of them out and put it on the table,' I said. He did so, making sure all the time that I did not look at it. ' I'm going to touch the coin to establish communicating vibration,' I said. I approached the table, my head averted and my hand outstretched to touch the coin. When I had done so I went out of the room. ' Think hard of the date on the coin on the table,' I called.

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'All right,' he said. '1889,' I said. He was silent for a moment; then said, 'Do it again.' I repeated the performance several times, Conway watching me every time I touched a new coin to make sure that I did not look at it. Each time I 'guessed' the date right. 'Fake?' I demanded. He looked greatly troubled. 'I must say,' he admitted, 'it looks genuine enough to me. I don't understand it!' 'The oldest parlour trick in the world—and the simplest,' I said. Then I showed him how it was done with palming, substituting for the coin to be guessed another coin at the date of which I had looked in the hall. 'Who is the gullible one, then?' I demanded. 'You or I?'"

He enjoyed the joke heartily.

"But," he added, "Sir William's little trick proved just the contrary of what he designed it to do. If Sir William, whose ability as a sleight-of-hand performer is at best that of an amateur, can fool a man like Moncure Conway on his guard against him, how much chance has a sorrowing mother, sitting in a dark room and hoping to get a message from her dead son, to detect the strings in the dark put there by a practised 'medium'?

"As for the speculations in which spiritualists indulge as solemn *pronunciamientos* about such immortality as they picture, I agree with admiration with what Dean Inge—a brilliant man—says in one of his 'Outspoken Essays.' He points out that belief in immortality depends on faith in supra-temporal absolute values; which brings us to an order of ideas which has nothing in common with the 'revelations' on which spiritualists base their beliefs; and that the moment we are asked to accept 'scientific evidence' for spiritual truth, the alleged spiritual truth becomes for us neither scientific nor truth."

II.

H. G. WELLS.

I POINTED out to Mr. H. G. Wells that men like Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Barrett, Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, and others of their calibre believed that spirits of the dead communicate with the living.

"What do you deduce from the fact that so many first-rate men of science agree in this belief?" I asked him.

"Only that they are extremely gullible," Mr. Wells replied. "We can rule out entirely the question of sincerity. These men believe every word they say on spiritualism. There is no more honest man, for example, than Sir Oliver Lodge. He is so very honest that he is perfectly incapable of cheating. You and I, if we wanted to do it, might succeed in stealing a ride on the railway. If caught, we might be able to concoct a fairly plausible story and escape punishment. But Sir Oliver Lodge and his kind could never do it even if they wanted to. Their very honesty, however, is so fundamental with them that they are incapable of judging dishonesty.

"The scientist, the professor, the student deep in his speciality, have always been the easy prey of cheats. What chance has a man who has spent his days in a laboratory to detect the expert cheating of a Palladino, trained as she had been from childhood as a professional trickster? A scientist's training makes him a good judge of, say, the nature and the behaviour of chemical elements; not of sleight-of-hand. Of that sort of thing you or I or any other man picked at random is as good a judge as the greatest physicist on earth. And a third-rate magician producing rabbits and flowers out of a borrowed hat can mystify any of us with more 'miracles' than the most 'gifted' medium. Only we at the magician's show are not fundamentally deceived. We know that we are being hoodwinked; and the magician makes no pretence that his rabbits and flowers actually come to life in the hat. Whereas your 'medium' and your scientist who has wandered from his laboratory into the séance-room take their 'phenomena' seriously.

"Nor do they stop at merely belief in the mystery of mandolins played in the dark by invisible hands. They proceed to build up a new heaven on the basis of these 'miracles.' And such a heaven! If you have lost your teeth here on earth they are restored to you in that heaven in perfect order. Baldness need no longer worry the forward-looking spirit. There shall be given each man, as soon as he passes to the heaven of the spiritualists, a shock of hair such as will put to shame any hair-restorer advertisement. Warts and other imperfections will be removed; complexions restored; or if you never had any worth restoring, you will be supplied with a super-complexion. For they have bodies in that heaven.

"I wonder what their dietary is; and their systems of sanitation must be interesting. The poor fellows who leave this earth in the midst of battle must give those doctors up in the spiritualists' heaven considerable trouble getting restored. But if one of them had a favourite terrier here on earth it is comforting to think that a sort of sublimated version of that terrier will rejoin his master in 'heaven.'

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"But it is not a perfect heaven, I understand. From Sir Oliver Lodge's 'Raymond' I learn that the whisky and cigars made there are distinctly of an inferior order. At least, new-comers, after sampling them, lose their appetite for more. But I suppose the poorness of quality is intentional, in order to wean us from the gross appetites which we forget to leave on earth."

"Is your chief objection to spiritualism, then, that you do not like the picture?" I asked.

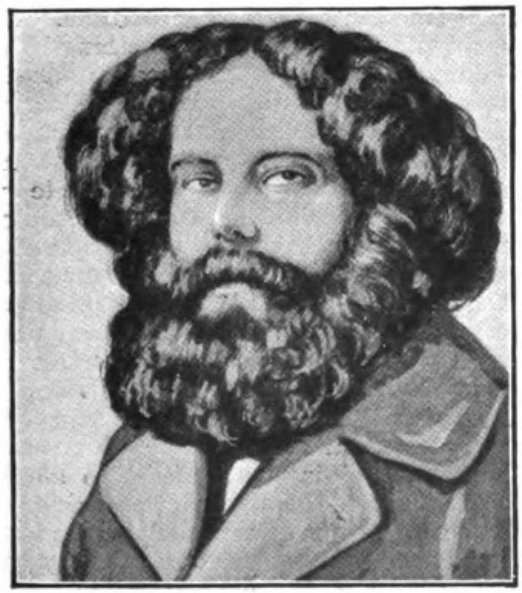
"There is nothing to make me believe for an instant in the reality of the picture," he replied. "Sir Oliver Lodge and the others think that because some mediums are eminently respectable and do not ask money for their 'séances,' that makes their reports true. People will sometimes lie and cheat for prizes other than money. To gain an audience and a stage; to be written about, talked about, visited by the credulous; to be looked upon as the medium through whom a higher world is glimpsed; to be made much of in general—these are certainly temptations. And many have yielded to them and set themselves up as mediums.

"Or take a kind-hearted man or woman looking on the grief of a woman who had lost a beloved son in the war. The world is full of such grief just now. The kind person sees a way of lessening the pain of the loss. All right. He tells the bereaved mother that through him she can commune with her son; that her son is happy beyond words in a world she can readily understand in terms of all that is pretty in this world. What a temptation to do a kindness! Really, if a sorrowing woman finds any comfort in such a picture of a 'restored' beloved as the spiritualists draw, it is almost forgivable to let her take comfort in it. To me the whole thing lacks the remotest feeling of reality.

"It would be a wise mother indeed who would recognize her own son with all his imperfections ironed out, as they are supposed to be in the spiritualists' heaven. The whole idea of a *personal* immortality is absurd on the face of it. Take away the little characteristics which distinguish one human from another, smooth them out—and what is left? Little more than a formula. Where is the personality in it? Who could entertain the slightest personal interest in such a residue? If people followed out the logical implications of the things the spiritualists promise of their heaven there would be less enthusiasm for it."

"Would you say that science declares the claims of spiritualism impossible?" I asked.

"I shouldn't want to put science in the position of finality on any matter. Of course, there are forces still unseen and unknown. New worlds will be discovered by science. Marvels will come. But they will be discoveries that will connect with what we already know. The new will be part of our system. The feel of reality will be irresistible. And they will not depend on disordered imagination or the spooky atmosphere for their existence."



HE SIGNED A CONTRACT TO PLAY CAVEMAN IN THE MOVIES, AND LATER DECIDED TO SHAVE; BUT THE LAW WOULD NOT LET HIM.

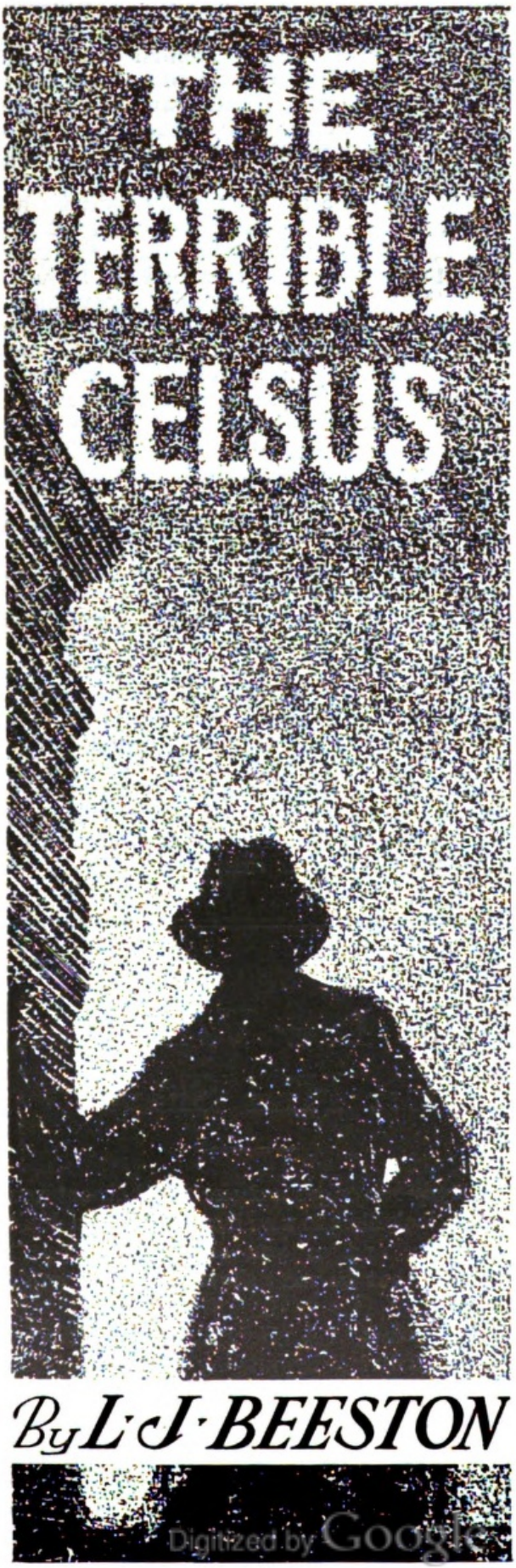
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The Law Will Not Let Him Shave!

IF you never got a shave and hair-cut you would look like the man herewith. You don't want to, and so you shave. He doesn't want to, but he can't shave; the law won't let him.

For years he, Henry Francis Koser, earned a living by playing caveman in the movies. And then he met a girl—*the* girl; and she didn't like his beard. He decided to shave it off. The movie director heard of it. He took the case to court. The result? Mr. Koser is forbidden by law to shed his hair until his contract expires.

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By L·J·BEESTON

ACROSS the black gulf, below Westminster, which the river made between the two shores an electric sky-sign began to work automatically. First there was traced, on the concave wall of the night, the word "THE." Below that the line of another word advanced swiftly: "TERRIBLE." Underneath that, a final word completed the flame-picture: "CELSUS."

THE
TERRIBLE
CELSUS.

The first word was in white fire—a diamond; the second in green—an emerald; the last in red—a ruby. Enormous and bizarre jewels which flared at a vast height under the minute points of the stars, which were paled, and even obliterated, by such splendid rivals!

The dazzle caught the eyes of a man who was leaning against a wall. There was an expression of exhaustion in those eyes, but a sparkle of interest fixed them as the man watched the words appear, vanish as if blown out, then appear again.

The skeleton framework of the electric advertisement was at the top of a big shaft, between two warehouses, on the Surrey shore. The coloured lamps glittered on the grimed bricks of the chimney like gems on a swart African.

The man Goldman leaned against the wall and permitted a faint consciousness of this mild display of pyrotechnics. It was a change. It lifted him the fraction of an inch out of dejection, and held him there for the fraction of a minute of time. That was not much, but it was something!

Goldman was dejected because his luck was down and out just like the ebbed tide of the river, which made a wide, black, cold gulf in the night. Only no tidal laws seemed to govern his fortunes. He was pushed so hard that he lacked a top-coat to come between him and the thrust of the north wind; he had got down so far that he lacked the kind of food to make blood and blood-pressure. And wanting these primal necessities, why should he care if his chin was unshaven, his hat without nap, and holes bigger than shillings in the soles of his shoes? He didn't care.

The spark of interest ceased to glimmer in his eyes, and he turned them aside, for the running lights of the sky-sign and their plunge into darkness irritated them. A half-formed notion that London had gone quite mad over the Terrible Celsus floated through his mind. Perhaps London had. The name was on most people's tongues. He was

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the best-interviewed celebrity of the moment. No illustrated magazine was abreast of the times if it hadn't his portrait in its pages. The competition between the big variety theatres to get him was frightful; and where he appeared the outer walls were liberally adorned with photographic pictures of the Terrible Celsus in his most daring moments. The queues at the box-offices were after Celsus, and the line of motor-cars that glided up to the portals at opening hours contained occupants who wanted to see him.

Goldman vaguely remembered all this. He knew perfectly well that the Terrible Celsus was a magician, and that he was acknowledged to be the greatest master of his art ever known. He had taken to himself the powerful adjective which prefixed his name because of the nature of most of his tricks, which were essentially of the thrilling, the blood-curdling order. And since he made his audience hold their breathing, except when it gasped with alarm, and made them turn pale, and even to faint, it was admitted that he had a perfect right to style himself "Terrible." His reply to questions regarding his methods was well known. He said:—

"I take the impossible, and I make it possible."

He was making thousands and thousands of pounds. Goldman reflected on this for a moment, and a little bitter smile of envy twisted his lips. Ah, if he could have that wizard's takings for a single week!

As this mocking wish (it had mocked a multitude) passed through Goldman's mind, the electric sign went out for the last time. The hour was advanced. People who were not in bed were on their way to it. No use in consuming power for the benefit of wanderers and vagrants, or the curious eyes of bargemen creeping up the river.

With a dull sense that his loneliness was still more accentuated by the eclipse of the flaming advertisement, Goldman moved away. As he did so he noticed a figure about fifty yards to his left emerge from a shadow. It did not occur to Goldman that he was being followed. There was no reason for him to think that. He had done nothing wrong; and society, in general and in particular, was not eager for his conversation. But if he had looked back he would have seen the figure of a man, dressed very differently from himself, steadily stalk him, watching him intently, and gradually lessening the distance between them.

Goldman walked on with the lax movement of one who has no objective. He had got to pass the night somehow and somewhere. It commenced to blow harder, and his present wish was to escape the wind, so that when he came to a landing-stage he stopped and wondered how long he would be allowed to remain there.

A short flight of eight steps led down to the water, which kept climbing the lower one and tumbling off again with a desolate sound. By descending two or three of the steps Goldman saw that he could sit there with his back against the stone wall, and be completely sheltered from the wind. At any rate, he could stop in that delightful retreat until turned away.

In the act of descending he slipped, flung out his arms wildly for his balance, slipped again, and rolled down into the black water. Only for a moment. He could swim; besides, he felt more stone steps under him; but as he clambered out he saw a man run down to meet him, and felt the grip of a helping hand in his.

"You great fool, you!" exclaimed this man, raspingly. "If *I* wanted to end it, I would choose a better way than the stinking river."

The words "I wasn't going to end it" rose to Goldman's lips, but he did not utter them. Why contradict? Why argue? Why explain anything?

"A pretty sight you have made of yourself!" went on the other, in scorn. "The best thing you can do is to come with me, and waste no time either, unless you like double pneumonia."

Goldman followed, too miserable to reply, too benumbed to wonder.

"Best trot as fast as you can," advised the other, and set the example by going off with a long stride. "Come along."

Goldman obeyed. In a minute they had left the riverside and were hurrying quickly through quiet streets. Goldman's teeth rattled together; he endured an agony of cold. But it was not for long. His friend stopped before a little house in a quiet court, produced a key, and led the other into a hall, and thence to a room so warm and cosy that to Goldman it was like a nook in Paradise.

"Wait here while I fetch some dry things," he was ordered. "And take off what you've got, for Heaven's sake."

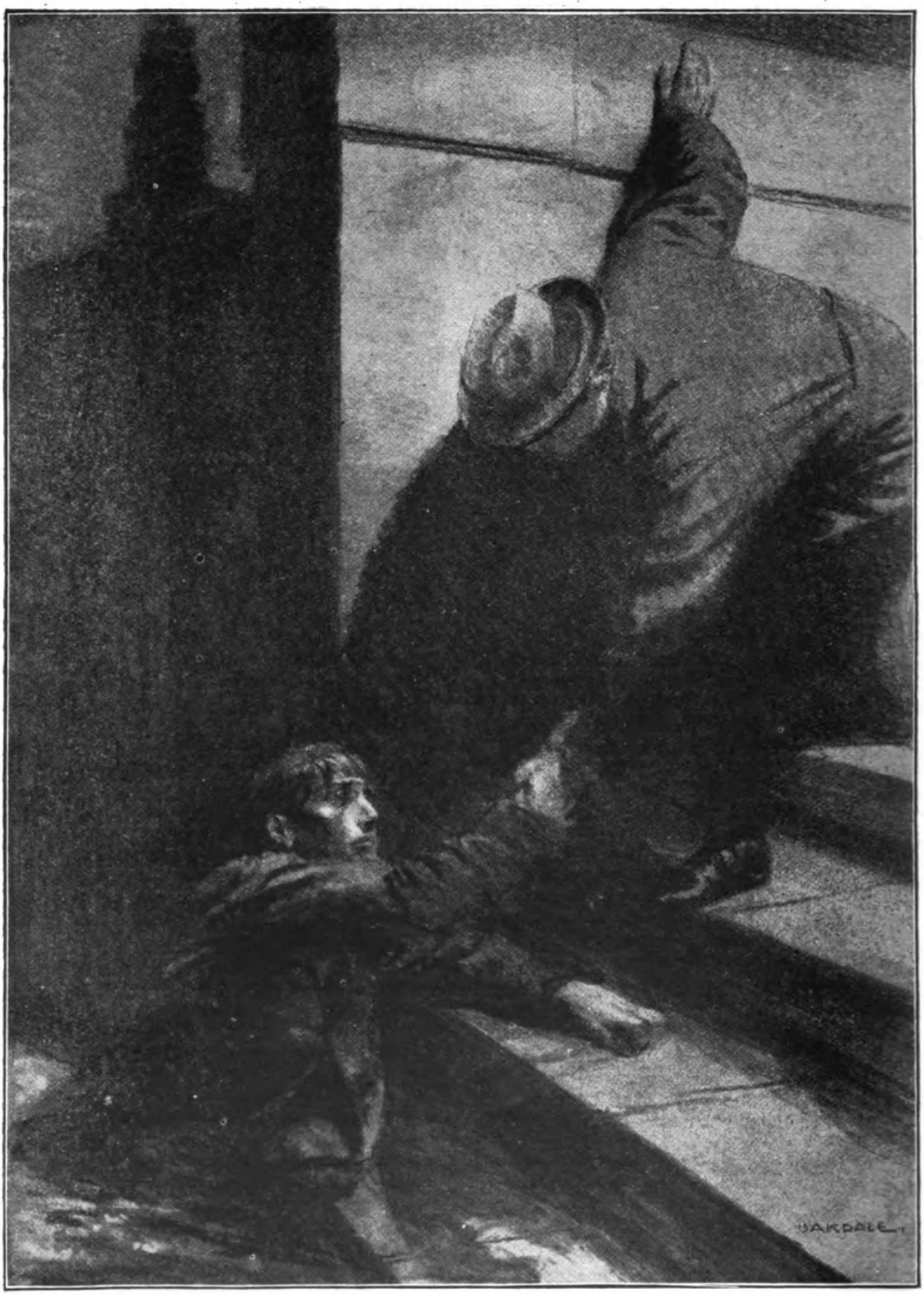
He had not long to wait, and was soon clad in dry under-garments and a decent outer attire. The touch of a bell brought a servant, who was ordered to take away the wet clothes and bring a tumblerful of hot Burgundy and something to eat.

Twenty minutes later Goldman felt as if he had sloughed his former miserable self.

"Take a cigarette," commanded the other. "I have something to say to you."

He spoke sharply, with asperity, but Goldman did not mind that. He inhaled deeply the smoke of his cigarette, and waited.

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"HE SAW A MAN RUN DOWN TO MEET HIM, AND FELT THE GRIP OF A HELPING HAND IN HIS."

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"I suppose you do not know who I am?" began the other.

"No," said Goldman.

"I am Frith Hambra."

"Indeed?"

"You know the name, then?"

"I am sorry that I do not."

"At any rate, you have heard of the celebrity who calls himself the Terrible Celsus?"

"Ah, you are he?" exclaimed Goldman.

"I am his manager."

"I see," said Goldman.

"You spent ten minutes to-night watching one of our big advertisements across the river. I was watching *you*. I have been up and down the Embankment every night for more than a week. Can you guess why?"

Goldman shook his head.

"I have been searching for a subject particularly wanted by my chief, and one not easy to find. Does that suggest anything?"

"I am afraid not," answered Goldman.

"I have been looking for a man attempting his own life."

Goldman started. He opened his lips to deny that he had attempted any such thing that night; then refrained, feeling that he would not be believed.

"That is the subject which I alluded to," went on the other, in his crisp, sharp manner. "I have found it—in you. Do not think, therefore, that I have brought you here to remonstrate or to preach. Briefly, I am instructed to find a man so absolutely wearied of his own existence that he will consent to place his life unreservedly in my chief's hands; and, on the stage, before thousands of people——"

Frith Hambra paused.

"Yes?" questioned Goldman.

"I have said enough for the moment. I take it that you will come with me and see my chief?"

"Certainly."

"At once?"

"I am quite ready."

"Wait while I 'phone, then."

The instrument was in the room, and in a few seconds the connection made. Well contented, Goldman listened.

"Yes, yes, I know it is late," he heard Hambra answer. "But I have the man here, in this room. To-morrow he may change his mind. Yes, yes, the very subject we want. I insist on bringing him at—— Good! We will be round in ten minutes."

He clipped the receiver. "We go now," said he.

In a couple of minutes Goldman was experiencing the luxury of a taxicab. His thoughts did not outrun the present instant, but sank down into it, into its comfort. But the cab was soon at its destination, and the occupants turned out.

A servant in livery opened the door. "This way, sir," said he to Hambra, without waiting to be questioned. He mounted a single flight and rapped at a door.

"Come on," said Hambra.

It was a bedroom which they entered, and the pink-draped lamps beamed upon the absolute comfort of it. Goldman took a swift glance round, and then he saw the inmate—the Terrible Celsus himself, who was awaiting him. Clad in pyjamas partly covered by a padded silk dressing-gown, he was sitting on the arm of a divan chair by the fireplace, smoking a cigarette in a long amber tube. Goldman recognized him at once, from the multitude of his portraits. A man of about fifty, perfectly bald, and his just-tinted spectacles sat well astride his aquiline nose.

"Confound you, Hambra!" said he, coolly. "Do you see the clock?"

"Bloodstone onyx; gift from the President of Ecuador. What about it? If I tramp the Embankment at such hours in your interests, you should show proper appreciation. Here is your man. He looks different from what he did when I fished him out of the river. The rest is with you. I'll take a seat and listen."

"Approach," said the other, with a grandiloquent gesture to Goldman. "What the devil! You are not old; you are not bad-looking; you are not a weakling. Therefore you are a fool to want to expedite your departure to the place where you cannot use a return ticket. But that has nothing to do with me. My need is a desperate man. Is that your case, or is it not?"

"Entirely," said Goldman.

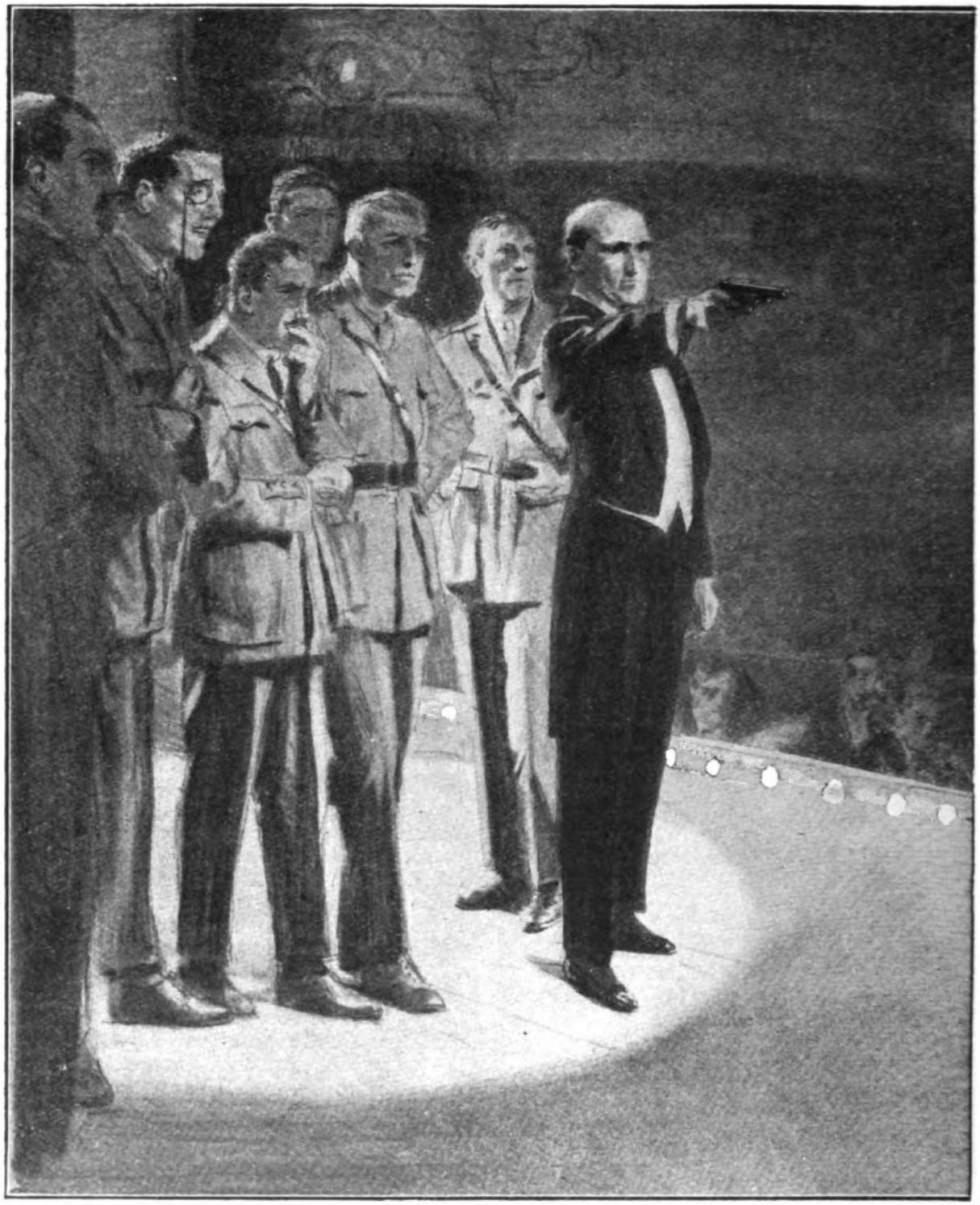
"So. The question was needless, in face of the circumstances. I put it because I have got to be very frank with you. I have made my small reputation by making plastic the impossible, by moulding it to my purposes before the eyes, under the very noses, of my audiences. But these audiences, far from satiated by the thrills to which I treat them, clamour for more, and of a still more sensational and hazardous nature.

"This brings me to the very pith of the reason of your being here. I have prepared a new 'turn,' which, if successful, should crown all others, and form, whenever repeated, the *pièce de résistance* of my programme. But it is, I am bound to admit, extremely hazardous. You are not the first subject to whom I have proposed a dangerous partnership in the performance; but you will be the first to accept—if you do accept."

"Try me," answered Goldman, quietly.

"Exactly!" snapped the other, with an impatient gesture. "That is the reply they

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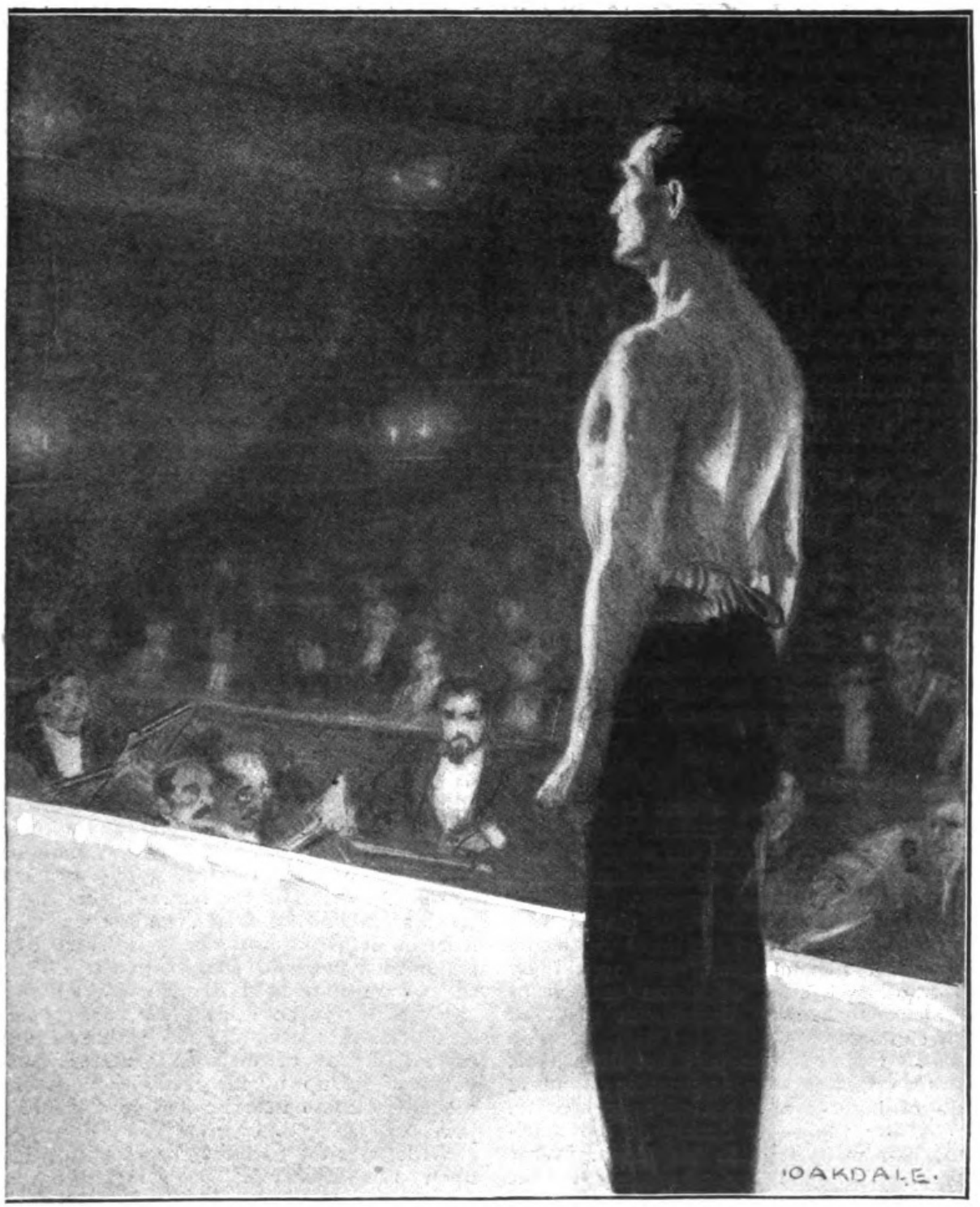
"IN A STERN VOICE THE MAGICIAN CRIED OUT: 'I INTEND TO EMPTY THIS PISTOL INTO THE

all make. They all start off with the belief that my reputed adroitness of hand and eye will enable me to do anything that I advertise; and they all smile an assured confidence—just as you are smiling now. But when I most earnestly repeat—as I do to you—that the element of personal risk will be large and grave, then some of them draw off, and some—ask me what I mean to do."

"Allow me to place myself in the latter category," said Goldman.

"Exactly, again. You belong to the pluckier section. You are saying to yourself, 'The great Celsus is talking just in the deadly-serious fashion in which he always addresses his audiences. This is his customary patter of the stage.' But you are wrong. Only you will not realize the peril, and you will not seriously begin to mistrust

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BREAST OF OUR FRIEND HERE. I SHALL COUNT THREE, AND THEN I SHALL PRESS THE TRIGGER.' "

my ability, until you are actually on the brink."

Goldman shrugged. "All I ask is an assurance from you that it is one of your 'turns,' your tricks of apparent magic."

"Certainly it is," was the immediate response. "And if all goes well it will hugely add to my reputation. But all may not go well. That is distinctly possible. That is why my manager there has sought a man who doesn't care much."

"You have not told me what it is," said Goldman, getting profoundly interested.

"I do not mean to tell you," answered the magician, coldly. "But as I perceive that you are a man above the level of the vulgar crowd, I will go further and explain my reticence. A not unessential part of my proposed exploit consists in keeping it from

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the subject until the very last moment. The result is that the subject, his nerve suddenly giving way, backs out. That the trick is not performed by no means diminishes my reputation. On the contrary, it enhances it, as you will see when the night comes. This I may term the prelude to the performance. Should you have spirit—or desperation—to go through with it, there will follow an epilogue. So apparent will it appear to the audience that something has gone wrong, that something terrible has happened, that the curtain will be rung down. Then, ten seconds later, it will rise again, and the success of the affair—*if successful it is*—will burst upon the house with redoubled strength. That is all I mean to tell you. If you agree, I turn you over to Mr. Hambra. He will look after you until I want you; he will arrange a present payment, and also a future one if you face the music. But I must once more repeat—although I know you will not believe me—that the risk to yourself will be grave."

"You infer that I may be killed?"

"Exactly. I shall *seem* to kill you; flagrantly, openly. Not one person in the house must doubt it."

"I am at your service," answered Goldman. Why should he doubt the skill of the world-famous magician? He did not doubt it.

The night came.

Goldman, occupying a seat in the third row of the pit, saw the curtain rise and the Terrible Celsus walk from the wing, meeting with a perfect blast of acclamation from a house packed to its full capacity.

Then, for half an hour, he played with the mystified senses of his audience, whom he treated like children, well repaid by half-smothered cries of alarm and gasps of amazement and thunderous roars of appreciation.

To all this Goldman paid but little heed. His turn was rapidly approaching, and in spite of himself a touch of apprehension, created by the sheer daring of the magician, had mingled with his blood. What was coming? He was absolutely in the dark.

He was conscious of being irritated by the keen enjoyment of the multitude. All this host had come to gloat, to revel in, to feverishly absorb, the sensational. They had paid for excitement, to feel their nerves tremble and shiver, and the red run out from their faces. And he—Goldman—was to turn out for their special benefit, and his life, in some manner, to be suspended from a hair.

Then, for two minutes, he listened to a deep-throated and terrific roar. The magician had retired, and everyone was frenziedly calling him on again

"My turn is now," thought Goldman, feeling a pulse beat strongly in his throat.

The howling died down as the artiste reappeared. He had removed a long robe, and was seen to be in plain evening dress. In his right hand he held a pistol of blued steel. He explained that the weapon was a regulation Army automatic, and he added that he had brought it with the benign intention of assisting anyone present who wished to shuffle off this mortal coil, to do so with a dispatch at once painless and brief.

The last words were Goldman's cue. He had received orders to wait a minute before rising, in order to give the dramatic pause full value. The proposition was repeated, coaxingly repeated. There was a slight general laugh, and Goldman got up.

Instantly he felt a kind of electric wave beat upon him, created by a nerve-thrill passing from all those who saw him, and which spread like lightning over the packed house, from the floor to the far-back gallery seats. For it was felt that the impending performance would be no banal trick. And all those eyes so eagerly seeking Goldman out, and the restless murmur that went up, agitated him. But controlling his emotion he made his way to the stage, where he received the magician's compliments, accompanied by a badinage which was hugely enjoyed by the audience.

The performer now begged any military man present to come forward and examine the weapon and cartridges, and, being satisfied, to load it for him. There was a good sprinkling of khaki, and seven men from different parts of the house started to make their way to the footlights. While they were moving thither, Goldman was requested to expose his chest, arms, and shoulders. He obeyed. He experienced a certain degree of confusion, and a nervousness set up by his position made his teeth chatter so that he had to clench his jaws.

With a strong effort he concentrated upon the situation. The mystery was made clear. The Terrible Celsus was going to empty an automatic pistol into a human body—apparently, of course. And he was going to do it in a fashion that would petrify the house. The weapon was to be examined by soldiers, loaded by them. The great magician would score, naturally; but he had admitted the distinct element of peril.

The khaki-clad figures appeared on the stage and were handed the weapon. The magician declared that not one was a confederate, and offered five hundred pounds

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to anyone who could show the statement untrue.

The men declared the pistol perfectly orthodox, and one of them slipped in the cartridges, which he declared to be live ones. Standing slightly apart, the magician held out his right hand for the weapon, which he received from one of the soldiers, who held it by the barrel. The man looked distinctly anxious, and his companions exchanged uneasy glances.

Goldman, seeing the automatic covering his chest, gritted his teeth and fought with his wildly-beating heart.

In a loud and stern voice the magician cried out :—

" I must ask pardon for the noise which this thing will make. At this distance of five paces I intend to empty this automatic pistol into the precise centre of the breast of our friend here, who is certainly the bravest man I have ever encountered. He is not compelled to wait, of course. Indeed, I shall be rather surprised if he stands his ground. I shall count three, and then I shall press the trigger."

Goldman felt his heart begin to struggle violently, and a chill sweat burst upon his forehead. Perhaps he was expected to run off ; perhaps that was a part of the performance. No ! By Heaven, he would go through it !

He heard the staccato voice ring out: " One ! "

He closed his eyes.

" Two ! "

An agonized shout interrupted : " My God ! be careful ! "

" Three ! "

His breastbone shattered, Goldman uttered a strangled cry and fell back into an abyss of night.

" An eyelid moved ! He is coming round, officer. He wasn't in the water more than a minute."

The man Goldman, lying on top of the eight steps which went down to the abhorrent dark flow of the river, struggled to lift his eyelids, as if the weight of all time to come pressed upon them with that incalculable force.

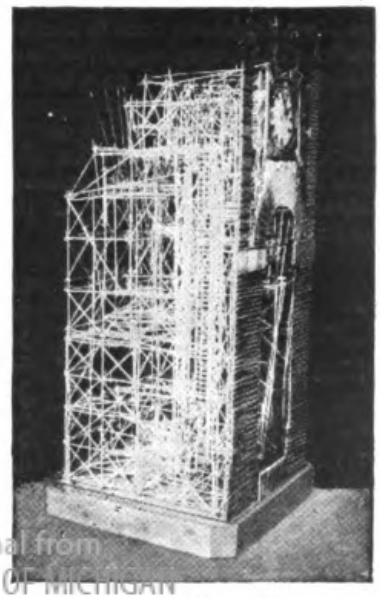
" Mind, constable, this was no case of attempted self-destruction. I had been watching the poor devil, who had been staring at the lights of a sky-sign across the river. He wandered on, and I after him. Bless you, I walked the Embankment myself at one time, and have a fellow-feeling for any decent-seeming man I see here now, late o' nights. I like to pick them up and help them—as I mean to help this one. I followed him. He started to go down those slimy steps with the intention, I am certain, of getting shelter from the wind ; but he slipped, banged his head, and rolled into the water. Ah, he opens his eyes ! I'll go for a cab."

This time the eyes indeed opened, staring upwards, wild and set, as if the torch of fear flared in their dilated balls.

In that last moment when the choking gasp of the drowning is over, and struggle ceases, many dragged out in time, plucked from the abyss by their very hair, have spoken of illusion which gripped their fading senses ; have seen whole and detailed pages of the past unrolled ; or moved in some ecstatic dream——

Or writhed in some grim phantasmagoria !

A Clock Made Entirely of Straw.



For such a delicate piece of machinery as a clock there could be no more unsuitable material than straw. Yet here is a clock which contains absolutely nothing but straw, not even a piece of stiffening cardboard or a drop of glue having been used in its making. There are eight pendulums, which allow speed-regulation. By pressing a button, which comes out automatically on one side, the clockwork is wound up and runs for five hours. By pushing another button the hands can be set right. The dial, figures, pendulum, hands, even the chain, weight, gears, and the skeleton, are of straw. The chain is fourteen inches long and endless. The diameter of the dial is eight inches. It took the maker of this clock fifteen years to complete it, working, of course, only during leisure hours and with interruptions, and in doing so he used many thousands of stalks of straw.

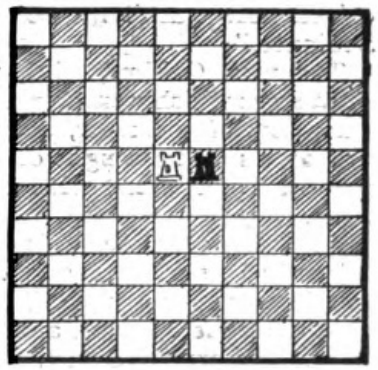
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PERPLEXITIES.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY.

499.—A ROOK PUZZLE.

CAN you show how White can capture the Black rook on his nineteenth move, after passing over every vacant square of the board? Of course, the Black rook does not move. Readers should notice that in this case we are using an enlarged board, 10 squares by 10.

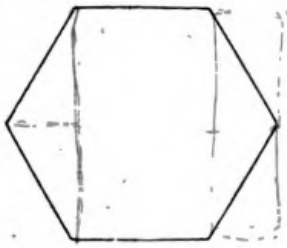


500.—THE SEVEN APPLEWOMEN.

HERE is an old puzzle that people are frequently writing to me about, sometimes to ask me for the solution and sometimes suggesting that I should present it to my readers. I therefore give it, but reserve my opinions about the character of the answer until next month. Seven applewomen, possessing respectively 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, 120, and 140 apples, went to market and sold all their apples at the same price, and each received the same sum of money. What was the price?

501.—HEXAGON TO SQUARE.

CAN you cut this perfect hexagon into six pieces that will fit together and form a square? It is quite easy if the reader has profited by other puzzles that have appeared from time to time in these pages.

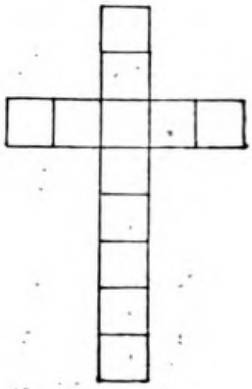


502.—LETTER PAIRS.

A FRIEND was looking idly at the word CAUCASUS in one of the bold headlines of a newspaper, when it suddenly struck him that every letter in it occurred twice. Thus, there are two C's, two A's, and so on throughout. Then he asked himself, "Are there other words in the English language having the same peculiarity?" There are plenty of small ones, like "noon" and "papa," but can you find one with eight or more letters? Of course, we bar mere repetitions, like "beri-beri."

503.—CURRENT COINAGE.

TAKING any eleven of the twelve ordinarily current coins of the realm (I say ordinarily, because just at present we do not often see the gold coins), and using one duplicate coin, can you place the twelve coins, one in each division of the cross, so that they shall add up to the same value in the upright and in the horizontal? Remember, there must be eleven coins, all of different value, and one duplicate.



SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES.

495.—THE ASYLUM GAMBIT.

WHITE can only have played into the open his two knights. As not one of his existing pieces can ever have moved, his last move must have been made with a knight which was captured on Black's last move. The Black king cannot have taken it on his own square, as 15. Kt to K 8 is impossible, for the Black king on his B 2 would have been in check before the move was made. The knight could not have gone to the square earlier, because there is no other last move then possible for White. The same argument applies to 15. . . . B takes Kt. Therefore the only possible last move for Black is 15. P (at Kt 3) takes Kt, and the other White knight must have been previously sacrificed by R P takes Kt. The following is the game as actually played!

WHITE.	BLACK.
1. Kt to Q B 3	1. Kt to Q B 3
2. Kt to Q R 4	2. Kt to Q R 4
3. Kt to Kt 6	3. Kt to Kt 6
4. Kt takes R	4. Kt takes R
5. Kt to Kt 6	5. Kt to Kt 6
6. Kt to B 4	6. Kt to K R 3
7. Kt to R 5	7. Kt to K B 4
8. Kt takes Kt	8. Kt to Kt 6
9. Kt to R 3	9. Kt takes R
10. Kt to B 5	10. P to Q Kt 3
11. Kt to B 4	11. Kt to Kt 6
12. Kt to Kt 6	12. R P takes Kt
13. Kt to K 4	13. P to K B 3
14. Kt takes Kt	14. R to R 4
15. Kt takes R	15. P takes Kt

496.—SPENDING HIS TENPENCE.

A QUARTER of a pound at 4d., three and three-quarter pounds at 2d., and six pounds at a farthing is correct, except that it does not secure the largest possible amount of the best quality. Here is the right answer:—

0 lb. 11 oz. @ 4d. per lb.	2¾d.
2 lb. 13 oz. @ 2d. per lb.	5¾d.
6 lb. 8 oz. @ ¼d. per lb.	1½d.
10 lb. 0 oz.	10d.

The weighing can thus be done, and the fractions in the pence are of no consequence, since the man dealt with only one butcher and the total is all right.

497.—A RAIL PROBLEM.

THERE must have been 51 divisions, with 23 whole rails in every division. There were thus 1,173 whole rails and 50 pairs of halves, making together 1,223 rails, as stated.

498.—THE KING-MAKER.

I, i.e., ire, rein, inert, entire, entries, interest, reinstate, inter-state, reattesting.

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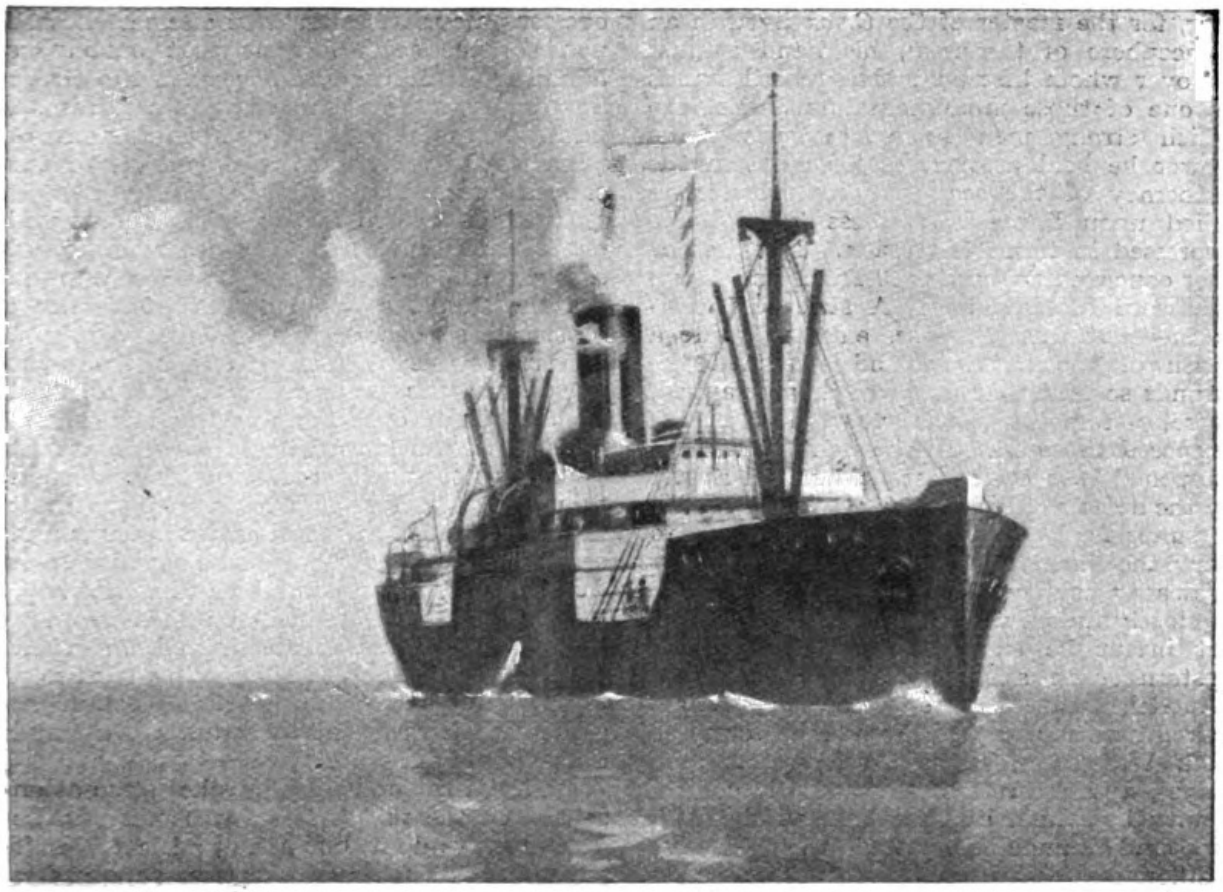
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"NOW THE BLIND MAN PLAYED HIS TRUMP CARD. 'YOU'VE FORGOTTEN THE LAW OF THE SEA. MY SHIP HASN'T BEEN ABANDONED. I'M STILL ABOARD.'"

(See page 415.)

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The £250 Prize Story

REDEMPTION

By

Oswald Wildridge

Illustrated by E. S. HODGSON.

Full details of the Short Story Competition will be found on page 416.

AGAINST Captain Christopher Swale no heavier indictment can be drawn than this, that in the hour of peril his crew abandoned him, the man as well as the ship. They even took the cat and left the captain—the only living thing aboard if we except the cockroaches and rats. Yet, when everything is taken into account their odious preference is not past comprehension; it may also be urged in their defence that they knew but half the truth. The other half would assuredly have stayed their flight. Besides, their conduct was not induced by malice or revenge; it was a concession to

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fear, for the master of the *Orion* lived in an atmosphere of terrorism, his hand against all over whom he ruled. His record stands as one of those monumental mistakes into which strong men so mysteriously drift. Power he held as part of his right in the autocracy of the sea; for its exercise he relied upon Force in ruthless form, Force expressed in terms of passion. Not that he ever conceded so much. "Discipline" was the word of his fancy. A strict disciplinarian—that was his pose, only he made a fetish of the business, and stretched the strands so taut that many of them snapped, thereby fomenting the very disaster he purposed to avoid. In the light of all that happened it is clear that he was led astray by the defects of his own quality; never able to suffer fools gladly, he knew not where to draw the line, and therefore sailed the seas in deadly enmity with those whose lot was so closely linked with his own. Quite without intent he exalted the worst type of western ocean skipper to the dignity of a model, and, as time went on, he acquired almost as much legendary infamy as Nick Waterman, Black Taylor, that man Hayes, and the rest of the despotic confraternity by whom life was held as cheap as dirt and humanity treated with derisive indifference.

Only in their methods, however, did the parallel hold. Descending the gangway Swale seemed to leave his ferocity behind. By the shore-folks a certain blend of brusqueness and reserve was accepted as a sign of character; even his wife had little fault to find, and his children idolized. But his brass-bound comrades knew, and by many it was predicted with confidence, that "a day would come."

"Mark my words," said Captain Martin Topp one night when he called at Danes Island and found the traders' store agog with the latest yarn of Swale's brutality. "He'll go too far. They'll turn on him. Mutiny. And serve him right. A master's bound to have his own way, but there's no call for Swale's thunder and lightning."

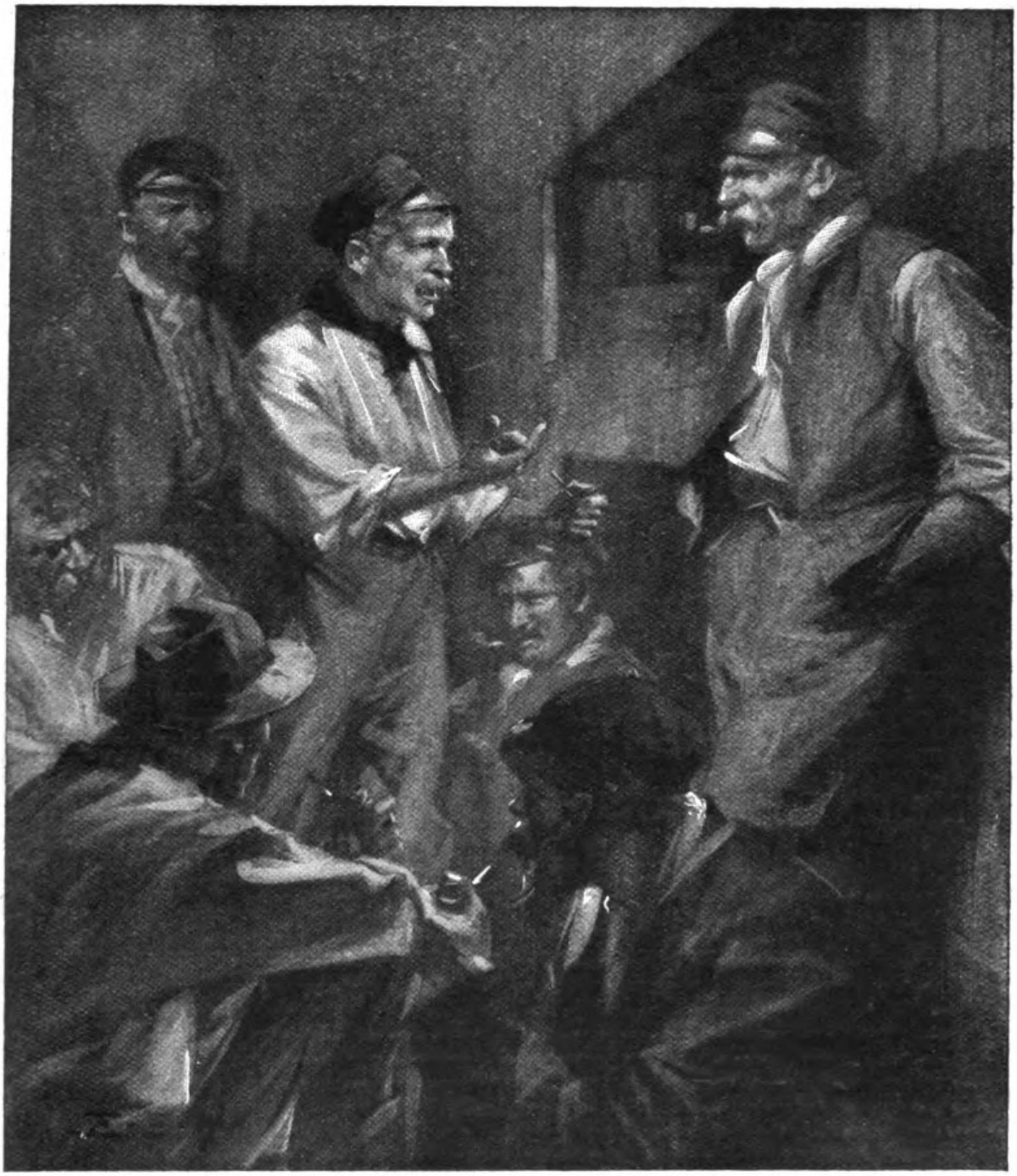
Afterwards prophecy spoke in a new strain, declaring that even if the men spared him the owners would demand his head. His way must be paid for and the bills were coming in. Already he was on the black list in every port that mattered; everywhere crews of the type he wanted were shying at his service. "*Orion*," they would say. "That's Swale's ship. No, thank ye. None of your hell-boats for me." And so it became a regular thing for him to make his departures with a growing proportion of packet-rats and pier-head jumpers. Nothing like the sort to ensure a passage good enough to satisfy the owners. Nor yet to resist the chance of an eye for an eye if it should be offered, though none of the seers foresaw that barbarous handling of the opportunity when the *Orion* impotently wallowed in the South Atlantic, both the mates washed overboard, four of the crew as well, and Swale went off to the cabin to nurse his injured head.

It was all so crushingly ironic. He started out to crack the skulls of other men and cracked his own instead. It was not enough that he should give an order but he must accelerate its execution with a belaying-pin. It was for this he made that leap from the poop, and the crew whose spirit he had broken, worn out, too, by the stress and disaster of the storm, fled from the attack that was never delivered. For the gale had tumbled a welter of wreckage just abaft the main-hatch, his spring fell short, and crashing down on the deck he lay for ever so long, huddled up and breathing heavily, while his tormented men watched from a safe distance, malignant hatred in their hearts. But he had finished with them now. When he came to he never so much as glanced their way; simply scrambled up and off to his bunk.

Under this crowning stroke stagnation settled on the ship. There was much to be done, men to do it, but none to direct. Left to shift for themselves the crew sought the shelter of the fore-peak, and here, squatting on their haunches, they waited without knowing it for leadership. Though none of them ever looked for a lead from Red Curly, the skimpy, insolent ruffian of whom it may be said that he had a tongue like a sewer, every bone palsied by laziness, and a longer score against the captain than any other of the fo'c'sle gang, his beginning was a triumph of guile. After a brief absence he carelessly announced that "the wind had blown itself out" and the sea was "going down fine." An hour later he smirkingly passed the news that the Old Man was getting along very nicely. "In his bunk, sound as a top." This he knew because he had "got the Nipper to hinvestigate." Finally the insidious suggestion: "Say, boys, I'm thinkin' here's our chance. Wot d'ye say t' hookin' it? Before that devil wakes up. He'll give us 'ell when he does. Half kill us—unless we kill him fust. Which we could do easy, seeing we're fifteen to one. So let's 'op it. By a bit o' luck the storm has left us the whale-boat, an' we're not more'n a hundred miles from the Falklands. Heard the mate tell the second greaser 'fore they went overboard. As for navigatin'—Bosun's good for a dead-reckoning, so we'll be O.K."

Thus, while Christopher Swale slumbered in his cabin, was the conspiracy launched. At first, like most of the men who have aspired to his part, Curly found himself discredited.

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"WOT THE BLAZES DID IT MATTER, HE DEFIANTLY FUMED. MURDER MIGHT BE THE BEST WAY. HE'D DO THE JOB HIMSELF. NOW, IF THEY LIKED. WHILE SWALE WAS ASLEEP."

His leadership was not appreciated; they were not even sure that he meant it. But doubt on this point vanished when Jerry Hicks protested that "it sounded uncommon like murder," and Curly turned on him a torrent of scorching invective. Wot the blazes did it matter, he defiantly fumed. He wasn't afraid of a nasty word. Murder might be the best way. He'd do the job himself. Now, if they liked. While Swale was asleep. Bash his head in. They could report him washed overboard with the mates. And the devil would have got his own.

"But there won't be no murder," he insisted. "The hooker'll float many a week. Months. Shouldn't wonder if she barges about for ever. He'll be all right—plenty of grub—of a sort—an' he can shift for himself till he's sighted. It'll do the blighter good. We're only payin' him his wages."

An angry growl endorsed the verdict. But for all their fear of the man, they were as yet enslaved by a greater fear of flight, its

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terrific circumstance, the unknown sea, their risk of missing that chunk of rock one hundred miles away. So, yielding to their first impression, they rejected the way of escape, only to surrender in the end to Curly's exotic pleading. "I tell you, boys," he persisted, "we're in for 'ell if we stay. To get this hooker ship-shape—figger it out for yourselves. An' only Old Man Swale t' do the drivin'. It'll end in killin'—some of us fust an' then 'im—an' the rest'll get their necks stretched."

Thus hammered, the barriers of hesitation by degrees broke down, desire and resentment flared up into passionate wrath, a clamorous insistence on release. So they quietly fastened the hatch, converting the cabin into a prison until their preparations were complete, and about an hour before sundown, Red Curly, having first reopened the hatchway, slid down the rope into the whale-boat with the cat. "Better take 'er with us," he said with a grin. "The Old Man'd haze the life out of 'er if he'd nuthin' else t' turn on."

A ripple of subdued laughter greeted the sally, and then as the boat sheered away they cast the last shred of caution to the winds. Responding to the Bosun's lead, they broke into the only chanty fitting the occasion :—

"The work was hard, the voyage was long,
Leave her, Johnny, leave her ;
The seas were high, the gales were strong,
Leave her, Johnny, leave her.

"The sails are furled, our work is done,
Leave her, Johnny, leave her ;
And now on shore we'll have our fun,
It's time for us to leave her."

Defiantly they glared at the receding ship. Louder rose the clamour of their chorus. Now they wanted the wakening of their taskmaster, wanted him to see and hear, longed to fling their escape in his teeth, to gloat over him in his overthrow. But the ship made no response.

Swift on the flight of the crew came the black battalions of the night, starless, fretful, a night of strange sound—the far-off moan of the wind, clash of wreckage, the petulant slap of the waves as they ran in scalloped curves along the hull, the explosive babbling of the sleeper in his unattended bunk. When the sun again climbed over the rim of the plain Swale still tossed about in restless slumber, and twice again without his knowledge did it go and return. Drifting back at last to consciousness he lay for ever so long staring into a realm of absolute blackness.

"Lamp out," he mumbled by and by. "That Nipper—lazy hound.—Teach him—look after light.—Twist his neck."

A deep sigh fluttered from his lips, his eyelids drooped, once more he drifted into sleep. Awaking a second and a third time he found himself still encompassed by impenetrable gloom. "Mighty long night," he querulously complained. "Wonder—what time it is.—Wish it was day.—And no lamp.—That young devil." A moment's pause and then, "Nipper," he cried, "Nipper.—Simpson.—Damn you.—D'ye hear?—Bring me a drink.—Light and a drink.—Brandy."

Thinly his voice trailed across the cabin. Again he shrilled, "Nipper.—Where the devil are you skulking?—Bring me a drink.—Brandy.—D'ye hear?—I'll skin you for this."

His head rolled from side to side. 'Oh, lord," he groaned. "I'm on fire. My throat's blazing.—And my head. Something wrong.—Dying for a drink. Wait till I get on deck. Make them wish they'd never been born."

His mind had retained next to nothing of the past—the storm, the wreck of his ship, his accident. He was conscious chiefly of the fact that he was in his bunk, caged in tenebrous immensity, the ship amazingly silent. But by and by his brain began to clear. To remembrance he added action. With a resolute heave he flung himself over the edge of the bunk; his will, more powerful than the remnant of his pain, carried him to the floor and dropped him on the boards. Sent him lurching a couple of short strides and then—down. His first sensation was one of extreme foolishness. Never before had his legs refused to bear him. But then, never before had unconscious suffering sapped his strength for three days. Without bite or sup too. "What's up with me?" he questioned. "Weak as a kitten." Wriggling up on to his elbow he stared searchingly all around, listened also for those missing sounds.

"Mightn't be a soul aboard," he grumbled. "Never knew a ship so quiet. Nor so dark. Thick enough to cut. Must get away on deck. I'll crucify 'em. The swine!"

Here, indeed, was the old manner—with a difference. The tone was not the same. His threatening had lost its snap. And he was not sure of himself. Not even when he had struggled to his feet and discovered that, going with care, he still had power to get about. A week ago, without a glimmer of light, he would have made a bee-line for the companion, but now he hesitated, fumbled for matches, and only when the quest failed did he shuffle gingerly to the doorway. With limbs heavy as lead he struggled up the stairs; emerging from the hood he was overwhelmed by astonishment. Except for the play of the breeze there was no change. He had merely passed from darkness to darkness; from an empty world to another quite as empty. There was nothing. Aloft, the sky

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was a barren field. Looking to right and left he found neither massed pack nor flimsy outline. Nor any sign of life.

No signs, in this case, were bad signs. Suspicion flashed into being, but the word it whispered was "Mutiny." Mutiny—with his mates gone and the ship derelict. Tyrant though he might be, however, Christopher Swale was no coward, and this he proved by stepping over the coaming and hailing the deck :—

"Ahoy there. On deck. Watch ahoy."

His call volleyed away into the ocean wilderness and was lost. "You mutinous dogs," he barked. "Oh, but I'll soak you for this." But instead of passing on to the task he drew back down the stairs. "Better have a look round," he thought. "Must have a light. And a drink and something to eat." Groping through the cabin he made for one of the lockers, found his matches, rubbed one on the box, heard it crackle, rubbed and rubbed again. Threw it away and tried another. Threw that away also and made shift with a third. The flame of this one licked his fingers.

"Curse it," he snarled. Then his head jerked, his jaw dropped. He remembered something. He had felt the fire, was still feeling it, but he had not seen the flame. With frantic haste he tried another, was sure he heard the fluff of its ignition, applied again the test of touch, for the second time suffered its scorching proof.

"God!" he gasped. "I—can't—see.—I can't see. I—I—can't see."

His cheeks, already gone grey, turned to the soiled whiteness of chalk. Shrouded in sunshine he stood there in abysmal darkness, fingers clenched, eyeballs dilated, his face a mask of horror, his lips convulsively hammering out the refrain: "I can't see.—I can't see.—My God, I can't see."

From the first shock he passed to another frenzied test. Viciously rubbed his eyes, screwed his knuckles into them, struck another match, a dozen, all the lot. His fingers rained matches. For every one he listened for the flare. From two he demanded the proof of pain. As the box emptied the pangs of suffocation gripped him, every remnant of his stricken vitality seemed to flicker away; he thrust out his hands, pawing the air in quest of something solid for support, anything he could grasp and hold. He wanted his chair, his bunk, must have one of them, but his sense of locality had gone now, and so, moving from an uncertain base, he arrived at the companion-alley. Lurching about again he brought up now against the table and, working round to the settee at the farther side, he sank into its well-tried corner, whence he may be said to have embarked upon his appalling Odyssey. Crouching in the cushioned angle he sat through hour after hour, staring dumbly into an unknown, a terrifying world. Thought was a riotous jumble, body and soul alike were crushed by one colossal fact. Once, his mental vision slightly clearing, he rose tempestuously, shattered the silence with delirious uproar. "It's not true," he boomed. "I'm not blind. I'm not. I'm being fooled by a dream." He beat on the table with his fists and crashed into a bellowing prayer: "O God, don't let me be blind." And finished with a sob.

Slowly the shadows slanted up the cabin walls, the golden glow toned away to pink, to twilight amber, to the sable austerity of night. Enveloped by movement he was yet unconscious of any change. Life had become a monstrous negation. His absorption by the night was invested with a tremendous symbolism. For the present he had parted with much of his own personality. This was the agony of a new birth. "I didn't seem to know myself," he said afterwards. "Everything had changed—in the flip of a fly's wing. I went to sleep a man—I woke up a blind puppy. I was the last man left. At sea on a derelict. The loneliest creature in the world. The wonder is that I didn't go mad." But, instead of insanity, Nature, beneficent comforter as well as inexorable judge, bestowed the relief of exhaustion. He buried his head in the fold of his arms and fell asleep.

The length of that sleep he never gauged. Time was now annihilated, hours and minutes reduced to figures of speech, day a treasure that belonged to other people, the night eternal. Henceforth he knew not whether he dozed for minutes or slept for hours; only by the sun's warmth did he learn to distinguish between night and day. But of all his awakenings there were none so terrible as that first one, when after a spell of bewildered drowsiness the magic finger of reality touched him. Reason again tottered. A maniacal scream shot from his lips; impelled by the fury of despair he scrambled from his lounge, cannoned off the after bulkhead, and crashed to the floor. Still raving he blundered up the stairs, from the topmost step he turned his mouthings into an impassioned cry for succour.

"Help!—Help!—Help!"

Over and over again his clamour swept across the unresponsive sea, fiercely he kept it up until his voice failed, and then, sinking down on the ledge, he laid his head against the hatchway and prayed for death. But while he asked for death he longed with all the ardour of a living man for more life. Also he discovered that man does not live by sight alone. His thirst now raged for

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relief, compelled him moreover to realize his dependence on his own endeavour. So, adventuring beyond the companion, he embarked on one of the shortest journeys he had ever undertaken and yet the longest and most distracting. Three steps and he was lost. Knew not where he was nor whither bound. Lost on his own poop. On the first faint thrill of uncertainty he began to visualize the ship as she was revealed to him before the falling of the night, his night. Gaps in her rail through which a man might pitch, masts gone, decks cumbered with wreckage, poop-rail razed, for a blind man death-traps all about. With right foot and with left he tested the planking; his arms carved grotesque figures in the air. But there was no resistance, nothing to guide or guard, not even in that flat calm the pitch or roll of the ship, until, dropping on his knees, he felt for the run of the deck seams. From this also sprang that greater idea of a search for the water-butts on hands and knees, a creeping, crawling agony, panting, breathless, along the poop, down the ladder, along the main-deck. Water he must have or perish. But in spite of meticulous care he missed his goal, went straddling away to the fore-hatch. And when at last the dipper poured its stream down his burning throat hunger drove him forth on another grovelling expedition, first to the wreckage of the galley and afterwards to the stores, where an abundance of biscuit offered him at any rate a guarantee against starvation.

From this point the re-incarnation of Christopher Swale can be distinctly traced. He was like a child embarking on the great adventure, a grotesque infant equipped with the mental machinery of a grown-up. He required it all, too. Most of the old things were swept away, all things became new. Along with opportunity his long-established methods vanished, mannerisms as well. Action, hitherto so impulsive, was transformed into the very quintessence of timidity, of caution, also of craft and inventiveness. This is clearly demonstrated by his revolt against the indignity of his movement. With a long-forgotten fragment, flotsam from his boyhood most likely, he challenged himself: "Is thy servant a dog that he should do this thing?" And at once the decision: "I won't be a dog. I'll not go on all-fours like a beast." Thus resolved he ferreted out a bundle of seizings wherewith, still on hands and knees, he ran out a life-line from the companion to the break of the poop. A second he carried from the poop-ladder to the water-butts, a third to the fo'c'sle, and in time he twisted others here and there so that by their guidance he became able to move about with comparative confidence.

Oddly enough the action of his crew moved him at first to no excess of feeling. Their desertion was a trifle compared with his loss of sight. Calling them to mind he would occasionally growl a malediction. "Cowardly brutes." "Damned skunks." And this was all the measure of his dealing with them until that seventeenth night when a desolating sense of loneliness laid hold of him. "Wish those devils had stood by," he thought, sitting up against the stump of the mizen-mast. "Red Curly would have been better than nobody." And after that: "Wonder why they hooked it. They didn't need. Ship's all right. She'll not sink. She's alive. Any fool could tell that. No feel of a dead ship about her."

Lazily and hazily he drifted out on his quest. "Can't understand it. No sense in taking to the boats. If they'd stood-by we'd have had her under jury-rig by now. Blest if I can see why they hooked it."

All unawares, as so often happens to men in the great crises of life, he was on the edge of discovery. A tremendous discovery. So tremendous that the sudden revelation half paralysed his power of speech. "Me!" he whispered, awestruck, the accusation setting a new imprint on his face. "It was *me*. Not the ship. They wanted to get clear. That lot! A pack of dock scrapings. Couldn't stand me any longer. They'd risk death first. I—I—was worse than death."

Afterwards he perceived that other fact of supreme significance—that he had to be marooned before he could be convinced of error, but for the present he was dominated by the one overwhelming truth. He had been weighed and found wanting. Condemned by packet-rats. Now, scrap by scrap, the facts of his life were hauled from their secret limbo and mercilessly dissected. His tragedy was what he himself had made it. Of his own choice he had ruled by unreasoning Force, and by Force had he been overthrown. He had made his name feared and fear had betrayed him. Great dreams had he dreamed, and this was the end. Darkness, degradation, failure! Henceforth he would be known as the man who was left to drown. And there was nothing he could do. A living dog was better than a dead lion. Strange how these old tags were coming back. A living dog. And he was not even that. Neither dog nor lion.

This was the inheritance he would leave his children. Rescue would send him back with a blighted name. His boy would walk through the streets of Liverpool with him and be crushed by shame. He would be the son of the man who was left to drown, the son of a condemned sea-bully. Within the sanctuary of home he would know that misery ever lurked in his wife's eyes,

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"WITH RIGHT FOOT AND WITH LEFT HE TESTED THE PLANKING; HIS ARMS CARVED GROTESQUE FIGURES IN THE AIR."

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disappointment in her heart, with contempt for its fellow-lodger. Abandoned at sea. Dethroned at home. A derelict. The same as his ship.

His ship! Derelict! Once more he trifled with discovery. Inspiration wrinkled up his brows in a puzzled frown. "Derelict," he murmured. Then, "Salvage." And after that, "The law of the sea." He said it again, kept on saying it. "The law of the sea." It was a phrase of power. His pulse quickened, a flush wiped the grey from his cheeks.

Capitulating to the lure of the vision, as yet so flimsy in its form, he rose and began to pace the deck, not now with hesitating shuffle, but with the majesty of confidence restored. He was the master-mariner again, the penalty of blindness, its manifold dangers, forgotten. Tramp, tramp, tramp, he went, the regulation sailor's march, hands no longer gropingly outspread, but thrust into his pockets, head erect, lips in agitated action. "If only I could. Wonder if I could. I—think—I——" Too deeply impressed by a sense of impotence to finish it, he turned the broken affirmation into a passionate prayer: "O God, send a ship, and give me a chance!"

Moved also to endeavour, he felt for his guide-line, crossed to the rail, and, making a funnel of his hands, sent out a lusty challenge to any chance passer-by: "Ship ahoy! Ahoy! Ship ahoy!"

All effort was henceforth concentrated on the same end. He lived for that ship. A score of times in the day he would call, never did he cease to listen for her. Realizing that the *Orion*, despoiled of her top-hamper, might easily be overlooked, he made a raid on his signal-locker and tool-chest, and to each mast-stump he nailed one of his longest flags. Afterwards, haunted by the fear that in the night he might be passed or run down, he would fain have attempted the lighting of some of his lanterns, but recoiled from any trifling with fire. "Mustn't risk it," he decided. "Might have the ship blazing, myself as well." A slip with an oil-can, an accident with a match, might convert him into a living torch.

So we come to that thirtieth day of his blind pilgrimage, a day wherein Nature seemed to have rallied her forces to his side. The sea a flat calm, the wind a breath, an atmosphere of crystal clearness. And Captain Hezekiah Wing picked him up when quite a long way off, while Swale trapped the first note of the siren's asthmatic bleating. The call was interrogative. "Anybody aboard?" it asked. With a tempestuous "Ship ahoy!" Swale rent the heavens, completing the response by the frantic waving of his jacket. Then, posting himself by the rail, he waited. But not for rescue: he was concerned only with the part ordained by the law of the sea. For this alone did he brace himself as he listened to the sounds wherewith the ocean tramp heralded her approach—the thrash of her propeller, the beat of her engines, the eruptive rush of her exhaust, the cascade from her condensers, rattle of rudder-chains, clang of engine-room bell. Though none of these things moved him. After a month of darkened solitude, all the symbols of human companionship restored simply swept over him, left him as empty of emotion as a half-tide rock washed by the waves. His concentration was superb. Only when the summons to action sounded did he manifest any feeling, and that but a sibilant hiss through his clenched teeth, a squaring of the shoulders. Yet the call was merely framed in the conventional terminology of the sea.

"Ship ahoy! What ship's that?"

Tersely through his megaphone he answered: "Barque *Orion*, of Liverpool. 'Frisco to the Thames with wheat. What ship's that?"

"Steamer *Gaisgill*, of Newcastle. Cardiff to Iquique with coals. Captain Hezekiah Wing."

To the courtesy of the name Swale responded with his own—but the ships were too far apart for him to share its reception: "Jee-ru-sa-lem! It's Bully Swale!"—and then without a tremor he proceeded to fill up the blanks in his record. He had been adrift for a month or thereabouts. Alone—his crew of packet-rats having left him, for reasons best known to themselves. And he would be glad to know what Captain Wing could do for him.

"A month!" Wing crisply rejoined. "Man alive, I can believe it! You carry the marks. Strike me blind if you wouldn't do with a rest and a barber! You've raised a fine crop! A month. Alone. Then I reckon you're glad to see me. And you'll be wanting t' push along. So I'll come and have a drink. Then I'll put a line aboard and tow you t' the Falklands."

A mechanical lift of the hand acknowledged the offer, this being part of the great game of bluff. And then Swale fired that raking shot.

"Much obliged, Captain Wing. I'll be very glad of a tow—on reasonable terms, of course. What's your figure?"

Among his comrades Captain Wing was known as one rarely found wanting in a word, but Swale's audacity bereft him of speech. All he could do was to glare at that solitary figure on the derelict. "Did—you ever—hear—the—like—o'—that?" he managed at last, addressing himself to the mate. "Adrift by himself for a month. Ship

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smashed up. And he wants terms." Angrily he turned on Swale. "Terms be damned. We'll leave them to th' court. You're fair salvage, aren't you?"

"Not a bit of it." Now the blind man played his trump card. "You've forgotten the law of the sea. My ship hasn't been abandoned. I'm still aboard. I cut the salvage. You understand? The salvage is cut. I'll take a tow—on terms."

"Well, of all——" But Captain Wing, while canny enough at a bargain, had sense sufficient to recognize defeat. "What'll you give?" he weakly finished, and was told that Swale would pledge the underwriters to a thousand pounds.

"That your top figure?" To the question Hezekiah Wing added a threat. He stepped across to the telegraph lever and laid his hand on it.

"Not a penny more."

"Then," Wing stormed, "I'll waste no more time. I'll send you a bar'l o' water and some grub and get under way. Mebbe the next man'll be in bigger need of your tempting offer."

Little did he know the spirit he was up against. "Much obliged," Swale lightly answered. "But I'm well-provisioned. So you don't need to skin your larder." Not for worlds would he have one of them come aboard and behold how they held him in the hollow of their hands. Though after his rebuff none were likely to trouble him.

"Oh! that's it," Wing snorted, in high dudgeon. "Then go to the devil in your own way. S'long."

A vicious thrust of the hand on the lever sent the *Gaisgill* off again upon her voyage. As she drew across the derelict's quarter her crew beheld the twice-abandoned mariner rigidly posed by his strip of unbroken rail, to all seeming a man of like power with themselves, a man of vision who watched them go. His self-command was perfect, his face a mask. Internally he was a veritable volcano of desire; he wanted to scream to them to stay and save him at their own price, any price. Instead he waved his hand in nonchalant farewell.

As the collier rounded the stern he faced about and followed her flight—with ears, not with eyes. The harsh dissonance of her engines swiftly thinned away to a rhythmic drone. A maddening silence fell upon the world. "She's gone," he gasped. "My God, she's gone!" But still he waited, listening, listening, stern and motionless. An hour passed. Its end found him still at his post. And then, suddenly, his grim intensity relaxed. "She's coming back," he whispered. "I believe—she's coming back." Ten minutes more and he was sure of it. All the lost elements returned, the sounds, the ship herself, the voice of her skipper.

The barque was too rich a prize to sacrifice so readily, and now it was Wing who talked of conditions. "See here," he wheedled, "I don't like it—leaving you like this. All for a few pounds. Your old tub's in a bad way. Looks ready to go down. I doubt if I can get her to port, but I'll try it for a couple of thousand. And it's dirt cheap."

"Same as bluff," Swale mocked. "My old tub'll float for ages. But I'll tell you what. S'pose we split the difference. Call it fifteen hundred. And think yourself in luck."

Now, whether Hezekiah Wing did think himself in luck, he has never been heard to say. All that can be stated with assurance is that he chaffered for another half-hour and then surrendered. About the way of the bargain, however, he was clearly puzzled. There was something in Swale he could not understand, but perplexity gave way to pique when he clambered on to the deck of the *Orion*, for her captain neither offered him a hand nor left the poop to receive him. Also he was bewildered by those lines run out along the deck.

"Seems t' me," he said, as he mounted the poop-ladder, 'you should call this hooker the *Spider's Web*." Then he caught the stony stare of the sightless eyes. "Lord save us," he ejaculated, "the man's blind!"

"Yes, I'm blind," Swale gravely confessed. "I had a fall. I suppose that was it. I've been very ill. I went to sleep and—woke up—in the dark. And the crew had gone. But they didn't know I was blind."

"No," said Captain Wing, his voice strained, the light of a great wonder in his eyes, "nor did I know you were blind, either. And you let me sail away, heard me go, knowing that I might never come back. You. A blind man. Here, on this hooker, smashed up. All by yourself." And he swore a salt sea oath and gripped the blind man's hand. "Here," he boomed, "I want to shake. I've heard some queer yarns about you, but, by heaven, you're the gamest man I've ever hailed."

But Swale refused his praise. "No, no," he insisted. "I've done nothing. Only cut the salvage. Law of the sea, you know. A man must stand by his ship."

Behind this declaration another thought, of course, was madly surging, but it was Hezekiah Wing who turned it into speech. "Aye," he said, "that's right. A man must stand by his ship. An' that'll be your record in the register, but I'm thinking this is man salvage as well as ship salvage. I don't know what name they'll find for you when I put you ashore, but, by the Lord Harry, I do know this, they'll never call you 'Bully Swale' any more."

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Result of Short Story Competition.

OUR Short Story Competition, the result of which is given below, proved, as far as numbers went, a very great success, no fewer than 3,500 stories having been sent in. Those that won the prizes are:—

FIRST PRIZE £250.

"REDEMPTION," by Oswald Wildridge, Newby Croft, Rimington, near Clitheroe. *(Published in this number.)*

SECOND PRIZE £100.

"THE FLOWER-SHOW AT KWALIZ," by Herbert Tremaine, 122, Kilbury Road, Letchworth, Herts.

(This story will be published in next month's STRAND.)

THIRD PRIZE £50

is divided between

"THE VICTORIANS," by C. K. M. Scott Moncrieff, 136, Ebury Street, London, S.W., and

"THE DECOYS," by Robin Forsythe, Ardlui, Hawes Lane, West Wickham, Kent.

(The former will be published in "The Grand Magazine" and the latter in "John o' London's Weekly.")

The following table shows at a glance the selections made by each of the six judges:—

	Sir A. Conan Doyle.	Sir H. Rider Haggard.	Mr. H. G. Wells.	Editor, "Strand Magazine."	Editor, "Grand Magazine."	Editor, "John o' London's Weekly."
1	The Flower-Show.	Redemption.	The Flower-Show.	Redemption.	Redemption.	Redemption.
2	The Decoys.	The Flower-Show.	Redemption.	The Flower-Show.	The Victorians	The Flower-Show.
3	The Call.	The Call.	The Victorians	The Decoys.	The Call.	The Problem of Kesa Gozen

The well-known authors who were good enough to act as judges in this competition were:—

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE,
SIR H. RIDER HAGGARD,
MR. H. G. WELLS,
MR. CHARLES GARVICE,

but the lamented death of the latter reduced the number to three. We append herewith the opinions of these judges on the winning stories. Their comments, of course, were made in ignorance of the writers' identities, in accordance with the conditions of the competition.

SIR H. RIDER HAGGARD.

"Briefly, I think 'Redemption' very good. It has power, and the drawing of Swale's character is excellent. It seems to me to be the work of a practised hand, or, if not, then of one who should succeed, at any rate, in the writing of stories of the sea. Of the tales which you have sent me, to my mind, this one should come first.

"'The Flower-Show at Kwaliz,' which I have placed second, is, of course, in quite a different flight. It has certain weaknesses; for instance, Nekkan really has no adequate motive for the destruction of his beloved city, although this might have been supplied by a slight variation in the tale. However, presuming it to be original, undoubtedly the story shows considerable imagination of a sort which is not usual amongst English writers. The descrip-

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tion of the growth of the beans and the way in which the hellish natural power within them overcomes the forces of man is really fine. The only thing which I can recall as resembling it comes in one of Wells's books, where a red weed, introduced by the Martians, spreads over the whole of England.

"On the whole, I think this story should take the second place.

"The third position I should give to 'The Call,' by 'Stub-tenon.' It is not particularly original, but the plot is well conceived and its development is not bad; though the last scene in the theatre might, to my mind, have been greatly strengthened."

SIR A. CONAN DOYLE.

"The Flower-Show at Kwaliz."—"A very beautiful and original story."

"The Decoys."—"Original in idea, dramatic, and has humour, which is so essential."

"The Call."—"Very fine, but rather too large a canvas for a short story, and in some ways unsatisfying."

MR. H. G. WELLS.

"'The Flower-Show at Kwaliz' has real imagination.

"'Redemption' is a good story in a recognized style."

In addition to the four prizewinners given above, two stories came into the first six, namely, "The Crêpe de Chine Blouse," by Ella S. Boswell, and "The Call," by W. A. Johnson. We have made arrangements with the authors of these stories for their publication in "The Grand Magazine."

Two stories which would certainly have been well in the running for a prize unfortunately had to be disqualified for exceeding the limit of 6,000 words. We have, however, made arrangements with the authors of these stories to publish them in this magazine.

Mr. Oswald Wildridge, the author of the story winning the first prize, has favoured us with the following interesting account of his previous experience as a writer:—

"MY record up to a certain point may be compressed within a single sentence. I am a son of the North, born at Workington, on the Solway Firth, and the major portion of my workaday life has been spent in journalism in Lancashire. Concerning my adventures in literature, I confess myself one of the landsmen who write sea-stories. No doubt because the sea is in my blood. I am one of a race of sailors, generation after generation, men who commanded Cumberland brigs, East Indiamen, Pacific traders; one got his name on the map; one when ashore was press-ganged and fought under Nelson. My first serious attempt at fiction was accepted by the first editor to whom it was offered and appeared in the *Windsor* in 1904. The glow of that first success was renewed last year, when *Maga* opened its pages to me and expressed a desire to see more of my work. My first novel was published by Ward, Lock, and Co. in 1907, my second in 1910. Afterwards, utilizing most of the moments that Blackburn journalism left, I contributed many short stories, dealing with Cumberland seaboard and dale life, to various magazines. Then the influence of my seafaring kin secured a treasured privilege on the Mersey and enabled me to study the life of the river, its ships and men, from the bridges and cabins of its wonderful tugboats. One result was the publication by Blackwood's, in 1918, of 'Captain Co and Co,' a romance of river-docking and the deep-sea tow. Last Christmas Chambers published 'The Luck Penny' (following its issue in *Chambers's Journal*)—a novel inspired by the mystery of the *Marie Celeste*—and my latest book, 'Clipper Folk,' is in Blackwood's current spring list.



MR. OSWALD WILDRIDGE.
Photo. Rudeni, Blackburn.

"For my participation in THE STRAND competition all credit must go to my wife and daughter. 'Redemption' was not intended nor was it written as a competition story; my own impression was that the absence of a love element would probably rule it out, and I had not the time for another. But when it was finished I was deeply impressed by the enthusiasm of my two critics, whose judgment I have abundant reason to respect, and so I yielded to their pleading. My daughter's verdict was: 'Well, there are three prizes, and I'm certain there cannot be three stories better than father's.' In the light of the judges' decision, may I modestly claim that once more wisdom is justified of her children?"

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"GOOD HUNTING, OLD CHAP"

By "SAPPER" (H·C·McNEILE)

ILLUSTRATED BY W·R·S·STOTT

I.

THE Well-known Soldier leaned back in his chair, and thoughtfully held his glass up to the light.

"Personally," he remarked, at length, "I would sooner be sent to prison for five years for a thing I had done than be let out after two and a half for a thing I hadn't."

"An interesting point," conceded the Celebrated Actor. "But to the casual observer, unversed in psychology, it might appear to be merely a choice between five years of hell and two and a half."

The Celebrated Actor, it may be stated, had recently been dipping into various "ologies" in the course of studying his newest and greatest part. Luckily for the sake of the public, the leaves of most of the treatises were still uncut, which ensured that his rendering of the strong, silent Napoleon of finance would not differ appreciably from his own celebrated personality. Incidentally he had never intended that it should, but the author of the play was a serious young man, and the Actor was nothing if not tactful.

"I am inclined to disagree, General," said the Eminent Divine. "Surely the moral support of a clear conscience——"

"Quite," murmured the Actor. "Quite."

"Would cut no ice, Bishop," declared the Soldier. "Two and a half years is too long a time for such a comparatively frail support as a clear conscience. Especially a youngster's."

"Exactly," agreed the Actor. "Exactly. Two and a half years of hell for something one has not done. . . . Appalling—quite appalling." With great care he continued the delicate process of peeling a walnut.

But the Bishop was not convinced. "All the time he would know that a mistake had been made; that sooner or later he would be cleared in the eyes of the world. Whereas if he was guilty he would know that no such chance existed, and that when he came out from prison he would be an outcast—a jail-bird."

The Soldier shook his head and drained his glass. "Right in theory, Bishop; right in practice, too, if the clearing had been quicker. But two and a half years is too long. Hope would die: a youngster would grow bitter."

"Where is he now?" demanded the Celebrated Actor, sweeping back his hair with the gesture for which he was rightly famous.

"No one knows," said the Soldier, quietly. "He came out a week ago. His brother met him at the prison gates, but Hugh gave him the slip. And since then he's hidden himself. Of course, he could be traced, but his father is wise, I think, in not doing so."

The Bishop nodded. "He will find himself in time; and it's best to leave him alone till he does. A good boy, too."

For a while the three men were silent, while the soft summer breeze played gently through the old-fashioned garden outside, and the wonderful scent of the laburnum came fragrant through the open windows.

"I forget exactly what happened," remarked the Actor, at length. "I was producing 'King Lear' at the time, I remember, and——" He glanced inquiringly at the General.

"A fairly common story," returned the Soldier, lighting a cigarette thoughtfully. "The boy had been an ass and owed a lot of money to some bookmaker. Then he plunged on the Derby—the year Signorinetta won at a hundred to one—and went down, like most of us did. Two days afterwards a couple of thousand in cash was missing. Also the books were falsified over a long period. Everything pointed to him, and they found him guilty, though he protested his innocence all through. A month ago the real thief confessed—two and a half years too late."

The General shrugged his shoulders, and then suddenly sat motionless, staring with narrowed eyes into the darkness outside.

"Quaint how one's eyes deceive one at night." He sat back again in his chair. "For a moment I thought I saw someone moving by the edge of the lawn."

"And your niece?" pursued the Actor. "Weren't they engaged or something?"

"Yes. It almost broke Beryl's heart. You know, of course, the dog was his?"

"I did not," said the Actor. "Ah!

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that accounts, of course, for her terrible grief."

"If I had my way," snarled the General, fiercely, "I'd flog that young swine Parker to within an inch of his worthless life. And then I'd put a trap on his own leg."

The Actor nodded. "I agree, General. Personally I am no great dog-lover. They have a way of concealing themselves about the furniture which is most disconcerting should one inadvertently sit upon them. But a trap——"

He shuddered, and poured himself out some more port.

"If only we could get hold of the boy," mused the General, returning to his original theme. "I can guess what he's feeling, and the longer he goes on without the human touch, the harder and more bitter he'll become. He wants to be made to shake hands with reality again; to hit something, if you like—but to get it over. He's bottling it up—I know it: and it's a bad thing for a youngster to bottle up bitterness."

The Soldier rose and strolled over to the window. For awhile he leaned against the open frame, smoking quietly, and hardly conscious of the argument which had started in the room behind him. The power of the stage as a pulpit was an evergreen with the Celebrated Actor, and he felt in no mood for a discussion on the matter. The youngster, Hugh Dawnay, was filling his mind, and also Tommy, that morning.

He'd helped the vet. put the little terrier under, with a dose of prussic acid, and after it was over the two men had stared at one another, and then looked away, as is the manner of men who are feeling deeply.

"I hate it, more and more each time," said the vet., gruffly. "Poor little chap!"

"It's worse than a man," snapped the General. "A dog trusts a fellow so—infernally. Damn that young Parker!"

With which explosion he had blown his nose loudly and stalked off for a long walk.

At length he pitched his cigarette away and turned back into the room. And at that moment, very clear and distinct from somewhere in the garden, there came a low whistle.

"Hush! you fellows, listen!" The argument ceased at his abrupt words, and the two men stared at him, as he stood motionless half-way between the table and the window. "Did you hear that whistle?"

"Personally, I did not," remarked the Actor, "but at the moment I was engrossed in other matters. A vulgar habit—whistling—but not, I regret to say, uncommon."

"There's someone in the garden," said the General. "I thought I saw something move earlier, and just then I heard a whistle most distinctly."

"My dear man," said the Actor, with a beneficent wave of his shapely hand, "are there not maid-servants in the house? I fear that soldiering destroys romance."

The Soldier grunted. "Perhaps you're right. My mind was busy with other things. I think I'll take a stroll outside, too, for a bit. Give me a hail when you've finished your discussion."

He moved once more towards the window, only to pause on the threshold.

"Why, Hugh, my dear lad," he said, quietly, "it's good to see you again. Come in."

And the Celebrated Actor and the Eminent Divine, looking up quickly at his words, saw a man standing outside on the path, whose face was the face of one into whose soul the iron had entered.

For a moment or two Hugh Dawnay hesitated. Then, with the faintest perceptible shrug of his shoulders, he stepped into the room. He glanced at each man in turn; then his eyes came back to the Soldier's face and rested there.

"Good evening, General." His voice was quite expressionless. "I must apologize for intruding like this."

"Apologize!" The Soldier smiled at him. "What the devil is there to apologize about? I'm just amazingly glad to see you. Do you know the Bishop of Sussex and Mr. Trayne?"

"I had the pleasure of seeing you act, Mr. Trayne, just before I was so kindly accommodated at His Majesty's expense." Hugh's voice was as expressionless as ever. "I suppose you are still charming London with your art?"

For the first time in his life the Celebrated Actor felt at a loss. Had some charming woman made the remark to him—and many had—he would have known his cue. A deprecating wave of his hands—a half-hearted denial—a delicately-turned compliment; it was all too easy. But as he stared at the boy on the other side of the table—the boy with the tired face of a man—the cloak of mannerisms which he had worn successfully for twenty years slipped off, and the soul of the great artist—and he was that, for all his artificiality—showed in his eyes. More clearly, perhaps, than either of the other two, he realized the dreadful laughter which was shaking the boy's soul; realized the bitter cynicism behind the ordinary words. More clearly than they could he saw himself, he saw the room, he saw life through the eyes of Hugh Dawnay.

"I still strut my small part," he said, gravely. "I still win a little brief applause. And if I can help those who see me to forget the bitterness and sorrow of the day, even

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though it be only for a while, it is enough." He rose, and laid both his hands on the boy's shoulders. "Forgive an old mummer's presumption, my lad. Don't think me an impertinent fool prating of what I do not know and cannot understand. You have been in the depths. God knows how deep and bitter they have been—God and you—unjustly, unfairly—I know that. And to you at the moment we seem typical of the smug respectability which pushed you there. Vain words of regret—empty phrases of sorrow, cannot give you back your two and a half wasted years any more than my playing alters the realities of the past. But maybe the hour or two of forgetfulness helps a man to face the realities of the future. Will you not try to forget, too?"

"And what play will you stage for me, Mr. Trayne," answered Hugh, quietly, "which will help me to forget? Will you cast me for the principal part, or am I to be one of the audience?"

The boy threw back his head and laughed silently. "Two and a half years of the same soul-killing monotony. Why, I became an expert at talking to the man next to me, who was a 'lifer.' They couldn't prove he'd actually intended to murder the girl, and his counsel successfully pleaded drink. A charming fellow." Once again he laughed; then, with a quick movement, he thrust his hands in his pockets and, stepping back towards the window, faced the three men for a while in silence.

"For a moment or two you must listen to me," he said, and there was a harsh, commanding ring in his voice. "Each of you is old enough to be my father in years; I am older than all of you combined in reality. At least, that is how I feel just now. You, Mr. Trayne, have talked about forgetfulness; in time, perhaps, I shall forget. But there's something inside me at the present moment which is numbing me. I can't feel, I can't think, I can't hate—I'm simply apathetic. I don't want to have anything to do with men; I want to get right away from them. And I'm going—I'm going; but I'm not going alone." He swung round and faced the Soldier. "Do you know why I've come here to-night, General?"

The Soldier looked at him quietly. "To see Beryl? Because she'd like to see you, Hugh."

But Hugh Dawnay shook his head. "No, not to see Beryl. I'm not fit to see her—yet. Perhaps in a year or two—if she isn't—married by then. No, it's not to see any human being; not even her. It's to get Tommy; and take him with me out into the big spaces where, perhaps, in time one may see things differently."

Unconscious of the effect of his words on his listeners, he had turned and was staring into the soft summer night.

"All the time that I've been in prison"—and his voice had lost its harshness—"I've thought of that little chap. I've sat on my stool in the cell, and I've felt his cold, wet muzzle thrust into my hand: I've seen his eyes—those great brown eyes—staring up at me, asking for a hunt. But there's no hunting in prison—no rabbits: and I used to promise him that when I came out we'd go off together, just he and I—on to the moors somewhere—and be alone. He wouldn't mind even if I'd done it—even if I had stolen the money. That's the wonder of a dog: where he's so infinitely better than a man." The boy gave a little sigh, and for the first time a genuine smile flickered round his lips. "I've been all round the house, whistling and looking for him—but I expect he's in the drawing-room somewhere. With Beryl, perhaps. I wonder, General, if you'd get him for me?"

He glanced at the Soldier, and slowly his eyes dilated, as he saw the look on the older man's face. He glanced at the Bishop, who was staring at the cloth; he glanced at the Actor, who was staring at the Bishop, and suddenly he gave a little choking cry.

"My God!" he muttered brokenly, "don't tell me that! Don't say that Tommy is—dead!"

It was the Soldier who answered, and his voice was suspiciously gruff.

"The little fellow was mauled in a trap this morning, old chap: and we had—to put him out of the way."

"Mauled in a trap?" The boy's voice was dead. "Tommy mauled in a trap? Who laid the trap?"

And it was the Actor who sat up, with a sudden light in his eyes, and supplied the information.

"Young Parker, who is farming the bit of ground next to here," he said with almost unnecessary distinctness. "You can see his house through the trees."

"Young Parker? I remember young Parker." Covertly the Celebrated Actor watched the boy's face, and what he saw there seemed to afford him satisfaction.

"Where is the little dog buried?" asked the boy, quietly.

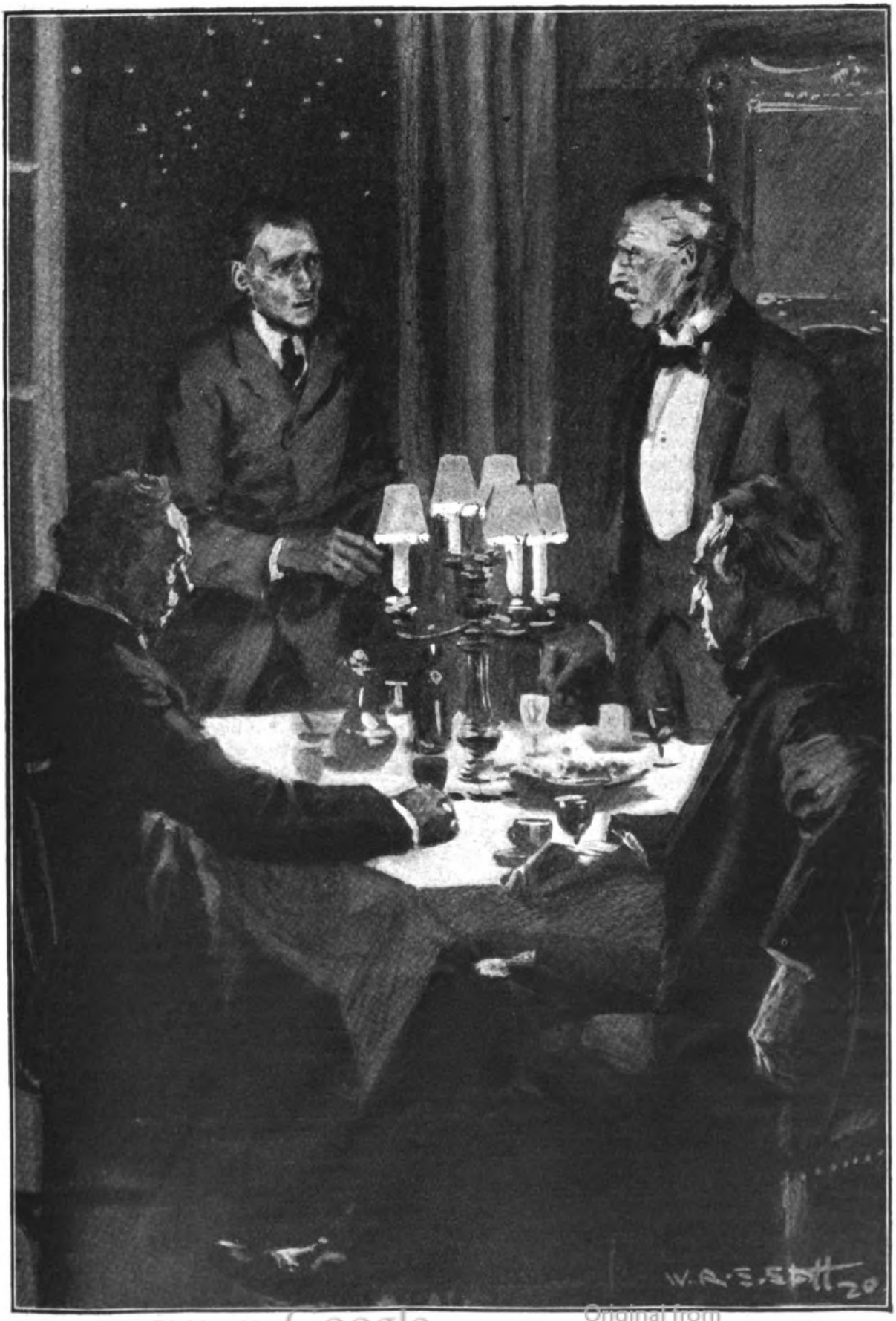
"Underneath the old yew tree," said the General. "Beryl put a ring of stones around his grave this afternoon."

"I see," said the boy. "Thank you. I'm sorry to have troubled you."

The next instant he was gone, and it was the Actor who stopped the Soldier as he was on the point of going after him.

"The boy has got his part," he remarked, cryptically. "At present he requires no prompting."

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"GOOD EVENING, GENERAL. I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR INTRUDING LIKE THIS."

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"What the deuce are you talking about?" demanded the General, irritably.

But the Celebrated Actor was himself once more.

"Leave it to me, my dear fellow," he murmured, magnificently, throwing back his head in another of those famous gestures which were the pride and delight of countless multitudes. "Leave it entirely to me. The stage is set: very soon the curtain will ring up." He stalked to the window, and stood for a moment on the path outside, while the other two looked at one another and shrugged their shoulders.

"Can't feel, can't think, can't hate. That boy feels and thinks and hates—hates, I tell you, at this moment."

With which Parthian shot the Celebrated Actor vanished into the night.

"What on earth is the fellow driving at?" said the Soldier, peevishly.

But the answer to that question was apparently beyond the scope of the Eminent Divine, and in silence the two men listened to the scrunch of the Actor's footsteps on the gravel, growing fainter and fainter in the distance.

II.

HALF AN HOUR later they were still sitting at the table. The Actor had not returned: there had been no further sign of Hugh, and the inaction was getting on the Soldier's nerves. Twice had he risen and gone to the window: twice had he taken a few steps into the darkness outside, only to return and hover undecidedly by the fireplace.

"I feel I ought to go and look for the boy," he remarked for the twentieth time. "Trayne's such an ass."

And for the twentieth time the Bishop counselled patience.

"In some ways he is," he agreed: "in others he's very shrewd. He's got more imagination, General, than both of us put together, and real imagination is akin to genius. Leave him alone: he can't do any harm."

With a non-committal grunt, the Soldier sat down, only to rise again immediately as a tall, slight girl in white came in through the open window. There was a misty look in her eyes, and her lips were faintly tremulous, but she came straight up to the General and put a hand on his arm. The other hand, with a piece of paper clutched in it, she held behind her back.

"Hugh has come back, Uncle Jim," she said. "Did you know?"

"Yes, old lady, I knew. Have you seen him?"

"No, I haven't seen him. Did he—did he come for Tommy?"

The General nodded. "Yes. And I told him what had happened."

For a moment the girl's lips quivered. "Poor old Hugh!"

Very gently the Soldier stroked the girl's hair. "We must give him time, Beryl. He's—he's not quite himself yet. By the way—," he added, struck by a sudden thought, "if you haven't seen him, how do you know he's come back?"

The girl's eyes filled with tears. "I went out to Tommy's grave again—I wanted to see that the little fellow was comfortable, and—and—I found this."

She held out the scrap of paper to the Soldier, and then broke down uncontrollably. And the man, having glanced at it, coughed with unnecessary violence and handed it to the Eminent Divine.

"It was just like him—just like Hugh," sobbed the girl. "And Tommy—why, what more would Tommy want?" She picked up the paper and stared at it through her tears. "'Good hunting, old chap.—H. D.' Good hunting. He's got a soul—I know he has. He's having the most glorious chase after bunnies now—somewhere—somewhere else. Isn't he?"

She turned appealingly to the Bishop, but that eminent Pillar of the Church was engrossed in the study of a very ordinary print, and from the assiduous manner he was polishing his glasses, he seemed to be having difficulties with his eyesight.

And it was thus a moment or two later that the Celebrated Actor found them.

"Successful." He barked the word grandiloquently from the window. "Utterly and completely successful. The curtain is shortly going up: it would be well if the audience took their seats as silently as possible."

"What do you mean, Mr. Trayne?' The girl was staring at him in amazement through her tears.

"A very human play, my dear young lady, is on the point of being acted. As producer, general manager, and box office combined, I beg to state that there will be only one performance. The financial receipts will be *nil*: the moral receipts will be a soul regained. And who shall say that it is not a more tangible asset?" For a while he stared magnificently at nothing, with one hand thrust carelessly out—that attitude which had long caused infatuated denizens of the pit to stand for hours in dreadful draughts lest they should fail to secure the front row. Then he returned with an effort to things mundane. "Follow me," he ordered, "and do not talk or make a noise."

"Where's the boy, Trayne?" demanded the General, almost angrily. In his own vernacular, he was feeling rattled.

"You shall see in good time. Come."

It was a strange procession which might have been seen wending its way through the

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darkness a little later. First came the Celebrated Actor—supremely happy, as befits the great showman who has the goods to offer. Then, a few steps behind him, was the Well-known Soldier, periodically muttering under his breath, and with the girl's hand on his arm. Behind them again trotted the Eminent Divine, unable to see very well in the dark, and continually stubbing his toes on various obstructions in the ground.

"Where is he taking us to?" whispered the girl to her uncle.

"Heaven knows, my dear!" he answered, irritably. "The man's an ass, as I've said before."

"But what did he mean about the very human play?" she persisted. "And the soul regained?"

Before the Soldier could answer, the guide turned, and holding up his hand demanded silence.

"We approach the stage," he declaimed. "Silence is essential."

He led the way between some trees, and finally halted behind a clump of low bushes.

"Personally," he whispered, "I am a man of peace, but it struck me from my rudimentary knowledge of pugilism that the clearing in front was ideally suited to that brutal form of amusement. And when I suggested it to Hugh, he quite agreed."

"You suggested it to Hugh!" said the Soldier slowly, and gradually a look of comprehension began to dawn in his eyes. "Why, Actor-man, Actor-man, I retract every thought I've had about you to-night."

He peered cautiously through the bushes, and a slow smile spread over his face.

"Tell me, Actor-man," he whispered, "how did you get the other?"

"I howled such insults as I could think of in my poor way through the window."

Then he, too, cautiously peered over the top of the bush. "What think you of my show, Soldier-man?"

"It is altogether beautiful and lovely to regard," replied the other. "Can the Church see?"

And, behold, the Church was lying on its stomach to get a better view.

The moonlight shone down, clear and bright, on the little glade in front. At the back of it, in the trees, stood young Parker's house, but young Parker himself, with an ugly sneer on his face, was engaged in removing his coat. Facing him stood Hugh Dawnay, and in the cold white light his eyes shone hard and merciless.

"So you want me to thrash you as well as stop your damned dog poaching," laughed young Parker. "All right, you bally jail-bird, come on!"

He rushed in as he spoke and his fist shot out as he closed. The fight had started, and from that moment no one of the fascinated audience spoke or moved. Parker was the heavier of the two, but the boy was the better boxer. In fact, in the strict sense of the word, the young farmer was not a boxer at all—but he was fit and he was strong. And had it not been for the two and a half years' hard manual labour which the other had gone through, the issue in all probability would have been different.

As it was they fought all out for five minutes, and then young Parker grew wild. He became flurried—tried rushing—his fists whirling like flails. And the more flurried he grew, the more cool and collected became the boy. And then came the end. A right-arm jolt below his heart brought the farmer's head forward, a left upper-cut under the jaw laid him out. For a while the spectators watched him moaning on the ground, while the Church wriggled ecstatically under its sheltering bush.

"Had enough, you swine?" asked the boy, quietly.

The prostrate figure mumbled something.

"Get up and swear to me that you will never again lay a trap in that part of your land. Get a move on!" he snarled.

"All right." The farmer shambled to his feet, watching him sullenly. "I swear."

"Now go down on your knees and apologize for calling me a jail-bird. Hurry up, you filthy scum! On your knees, I said."

And as young Parker went on his knees, according to order, the girl, her eyes shining like stars, clapped her hands softly together.

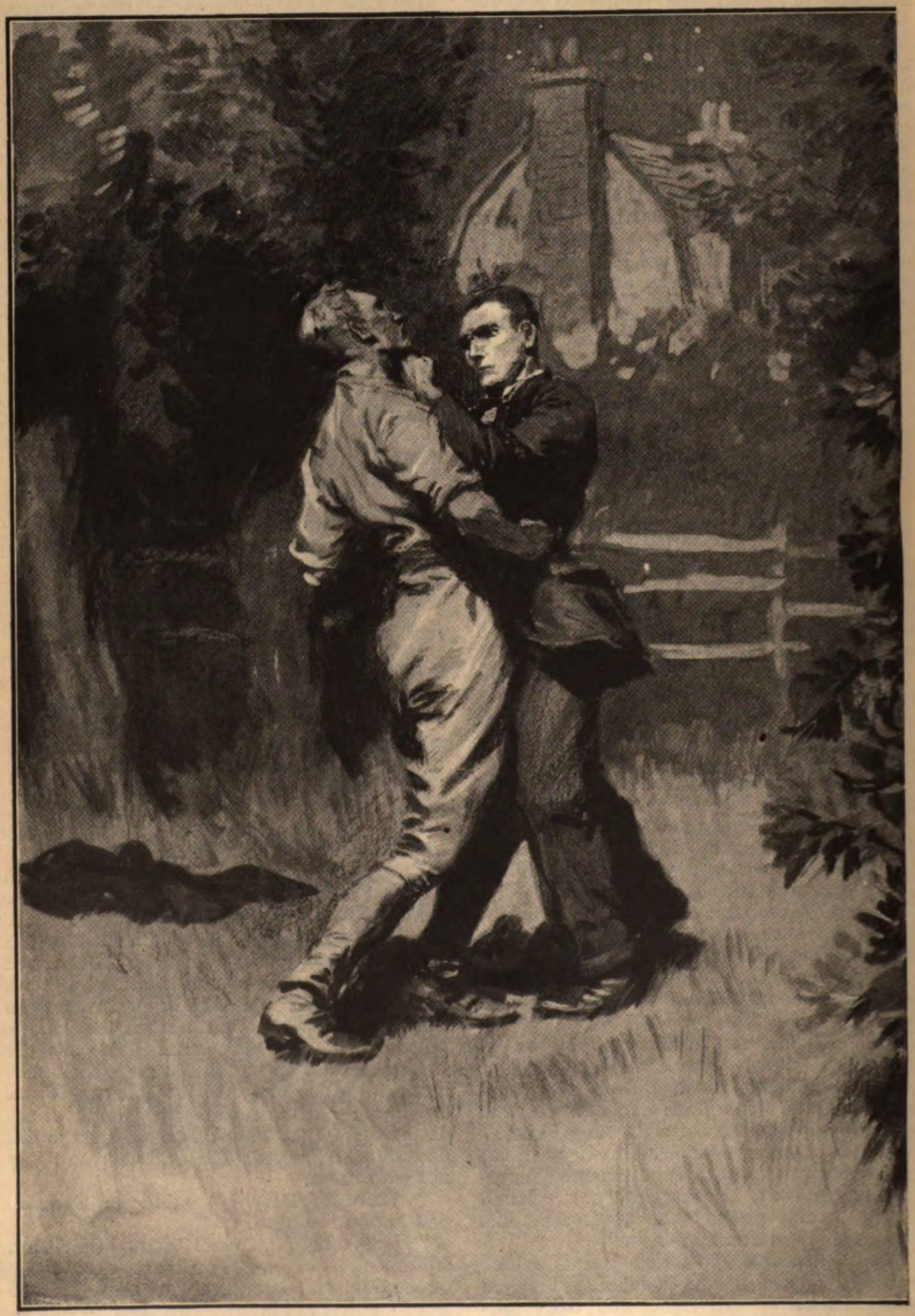
"Quick!" said the Celebrated Actor, authoritatively. "Back to the house, you people. The play is over and my estimate of the receipts is, I think, correct."

Stealthily as it had come, the procession moved back to the house. At intervals, the Eminent Divine was observed to jolt with his right, following it up with a slashing left upper-cut into space, what time he chuckled consumedly. And even a slight error as to distance, which caused him far more pain than the tree which he unfortunately smote, failed to damp his spirits. The Soldier walked with a spring in his step, the Actor hummed gently under his breath, and it was only as they reached the open window of the dining-room that they realized that the girl had slipped away in the darkness and was not with them.

"Where is Beryl?" said the General, pausing on the path.

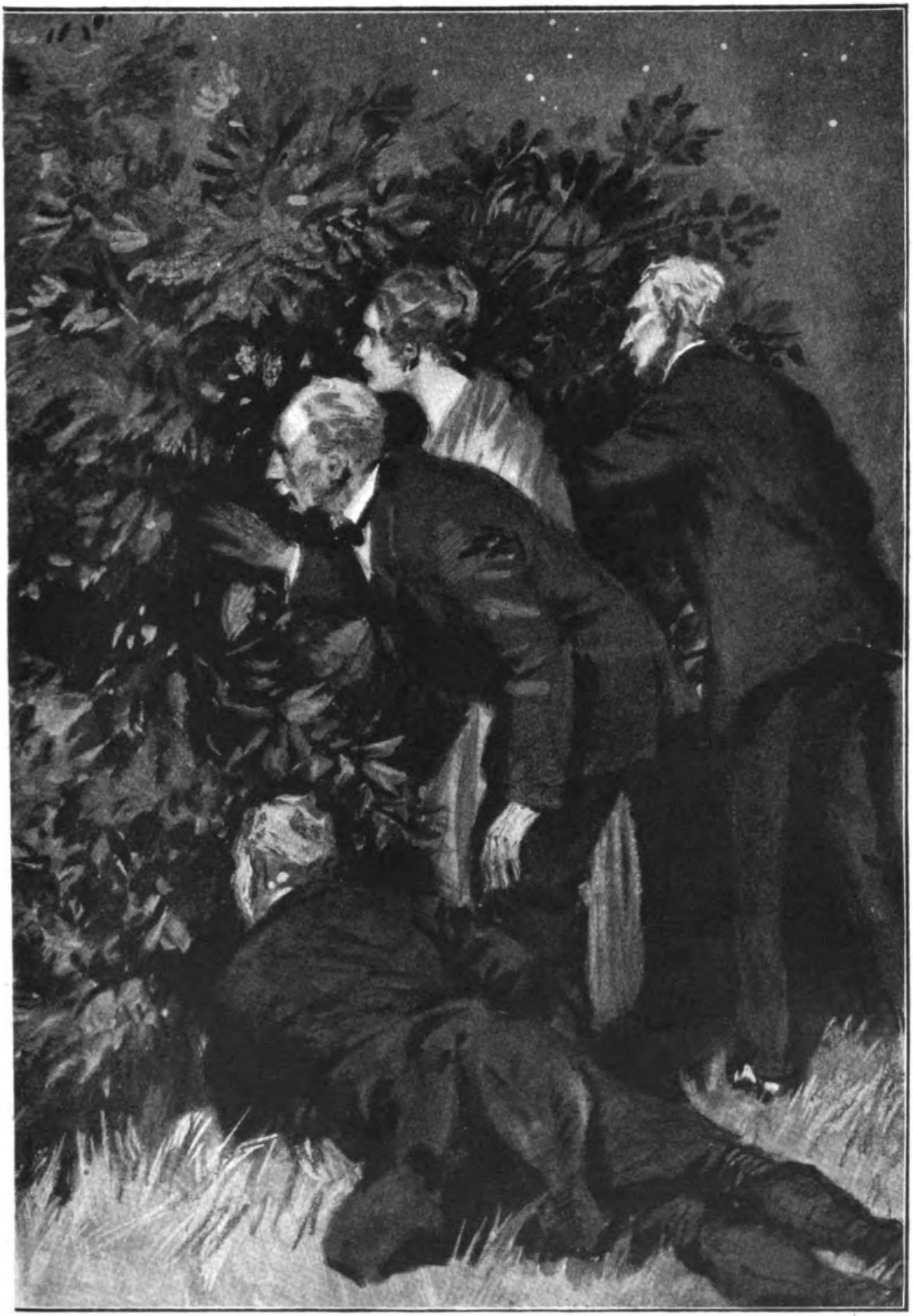
"Heaven help the man!" fumed the Actor, addressing space. "His past career, we understand, is comparatively distinguished from a military point of view. But"—and he turned accusingly to the Soldier—"you must have driven every woman you ever met completely off her chump."

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"THE FIGHT HAD STARTED, AND FROM THAT MOMENT NO

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ONE OF THE FASCINATED AUDIENCE SPOKE OR MOVED."

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"Chump," chuckled the Bishop, feinting with his right and gently upper-cutting the Celebrated Actor's celebrated chin. "What is chump, you old sinner?"

But the Well-known Soldier only smiled—a trifle sadly. "She's all I've got, old chap, and her happiness is mine."

"She is happy now," remarked the Actor, quietly. "The boy's all right."

For a while the three men were silent, each busy with his own thoughts. And then over the General's face a grin began to spread.

"Tell me, you charmer of foolish women," he demanded, "how did you manage it?"

"Your vulgar gibe leaves me unmoved," returned the Actor, calmly. "To-night is merely a proof of how brains and imagination control every situation. I hope you both appreciate my inference."

"Go on," chuckled the General. "The Church and the Army hide their diminished heads."

"What better destroyer of apathy is there than scrapping with someone, whom in less civilized and more primitive days one would have killed? I followed him. I suggested it to him—I even went so far as to assist him in his search for a suitable spot on which to do it. And then"—he paused magnificently—"I drew the badger. I bolted the fox. I extracted young Parker."

"How?" murmured the Church.

"I hit him first on the head with an overripe pear, which I threw through the window. A wonderful shot—not once in a hundred times would I do it again. And as he jumped up from the table where he was sitting, I spoke to him from my heart."

"Yes," grinned the Soldier. "And wh t did you say?"

"I said, 'You dirty louse—you maimer of little dogs—come out and fight, unless you're a coward as well as a swine.' Then," murmured the Actor, "I ran as fast as I could, for fear he might mistake his opponent and start on me."

For a space there was silence, while the Army and the Church shook hopelessly, and the Stage impressively lit a cigar. And it was as he deposited the match in an ash-tray on the table that he saw the piece of paper lying in front of him. He read what was written on it, and then he turned slowly and looked at the other two.

"So that's what he was doing under the yew tree," he said, softly. "Dear lad! Why, yes, he's a dear lad."

"Of course, he is," returned the Soldier, gruffly. "What the devil did you think?"

It was under the yew tree that the boy and the girl met. She was kneeling there, her frock gleaming white in the moonlight as Hugh came through the trees, and for a time he watched her without speaking. Two and a half years—more—since he had seen her, and now it seemed to him that she was more lovely than ever. His eyes took in every detail of her, as she bent forward and laid both her hands on the little grave, and, suddenly, with a great wave of wonder, he realized that all the bitterness had gone from his soul. The past was blotted out—sponged from the slate; he was alive again, and the present—why, the present held out beckoning hands of welcome.

"Beryl," he whispered very low, but not so low that she failed to hear him.

"Why, Hugh, dear," she answered, "I was afraid you'd go away without seeing me."

"I should, if—Tommy had been alive."

He knelt beside her, and together they rearranged two or three of the stones.

"I put a bit of paper here," he said, after a moment.

"I found it," she answered. "That's how I knew you were here—first. Oh! Hugh"—almost unconsciously she found herself in his arms—"poor little chap! And I'd been telling him all last week he'd be seeing you soon."

"You darling!" The boy's voice was husky. "He knows—Tommy knows."

And so for a while they clung together, while the scent of the summer flowers drifting idly by mingled with the scent of her hair.

"If he'd been here, Beryl, I was going to take him," he said, at last. "I was bitter—dear heavens! but I was bitter. I felt I didn't even want to see you. We were going hunting together—just he and I—out in the wilds."

"And now, boy," whispered the girl, "are you bitter any more?"

"No," he answered, wonderingly, "I'm not. Because, Beryl, because I've thrashed that swine who killed him. Something seemed to snap in me as he went down and out, and I was conscious of a sort of marvellous happiness."

"I know," she said, laughing a little and crying a little, as a girl will do. "I know, dear boy. I saw you do it."

"You saw me thrash him!" he said, amazed. "But how? I don't understand."

"We all did!" she cried: "Uncle Jim and the Bishop and Mr. Trayne and me. Mr. Trayne came back and told us to come."

"I see," said the boy, slowly. "I see. I think I'll go and thank Mr. Trayne."

But there are other things in this world more important even than a debt of gratitude to the most celebrated of Actors, and half an hour later the boy and the girl were still pacing slowly up and down the lawn. There were so many things to be discussed—so many glorious plans to be made for the future—the future out of which the blackness

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"HIS EYES TOOK IN EVERY DETAIL OF HER, AS SHE BENT FORWARD AND LAID BOTH HER HANDS ON THE LITTLE GRAVE."

had vanished so completely. And it was with almost a feeling of reproach that the girl suddenly turned on him.

"Why, boy!" she cried, "we've forgotten Tommy."

"Tommy!" he said. "Why, so we have." He stared at her for a while, and there was a little quizzical smile on his lips. "It's funny, isn't it?" he went on, slowly, "that the greatest thing the little chap has ever done for me he has done by his death." He took her in his arms and held her very close. "If he'd lived, it might have all come right—in time; but now——"

And Hugh Dawnay finished his sentence in the only way such sentences can be finished.

"Come in, you two youngsters."

The General's voice came cheerfully from the dining-room, and arm-in-arm they walked towards the open window.

Half-way there they paused, and instinctively their eyes turned towards the old yew tree.

"Why, there he is, boy," breathed the girl. "Don't you see him, and the black mark on his neck and his tail wagging?"

"It's the shadows, darling," answered the boy. "The moonlight through the trees."

Maybe, maybe. Who knows?

Gently he led her on, and she passed into the room ahead of him. And from the path outside there rose once again into the soft summer night the farewell message of a friend to a friend:

"Good hunting, old chap."

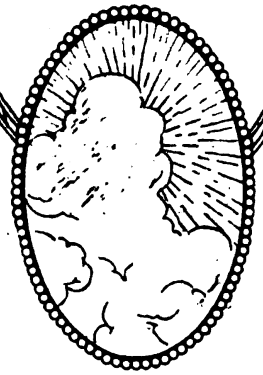
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IN MID-AIR

by

F. Britten Austin

ILLUSTRATED BY E. VERPILLEUX



ONE by one the machines ran forward from the long line of hangars where the stocking-cap wind-indicators ballooned stiffly horizontal from their staffs. One by one they scudded across the rank turf of the great aerodrome, and one by one, repeating each other's movement like rooks rising from a field, they swung round into the wind, hurled themselves against it, and were borne upward in long, slow spirals until, their height attained, they sped onward, in rapid diminution of size, upon their diverse courses. It was the busy departure hour of the morning at the London terminus used by all the half-dozen competing aerial transportation companies, whether their machines were bound merely for Paris, Brussels, or Amsterdam, or upon the long-distance schedules to Madrid and Barcelona, Marseilles, Milan and Rome, Munich, Vienna, or Berlin.

The somewhat harassed ground-superintendent of the International Airways, Limited, waved a perfunctory farewell to the Madrid-bound machine, which raced, prodigiously roaring, a miniature hurricane in retrograde escape from her, away over the field, and hastened, with quick, self-important little steps, to where the Amsterdam " 'bus " lay poised and peaceful in readiness for her flight. The overalled mechanics had ceased their pertinacious irritation of her engines. The last control-wire to aileron and rudder had been tested. Her great wings, fallaciously heavy in the thickness of their appearance, spread themselves wide, contemptuously immobile it seemed, in the gusts of that fresh wind, upon which, in a few minutes, she would soar. The pilot, helmeted and leather-coated, stood at a little distance from her, finishing his last cigarette for several hours, and contemplating, with a mild interest, the passengers who, having been checked off by an official, climbed one by one the ladder into the interior of the aeroplane.

The superintendent bustled up to him, was greeted with a casual nod obviously altogether inadequate to his dignity.

" You've got an important passenger to-day, Elliott," he said, with a snappiness of tone that was intended to recall a recognition of his importance, " so be careful ! "

" I've also got a neck," replied the pilot, unimpressed, " and I wouldn't hurt it for worlds. It reminds me of carefulness at every minute."

" Yes; I dare say," said the superintendent, in a manner sufficiently indicative of his indifference to its continued vertebration, " but this is serious. I warn you officially, Elliott, that you are to exercise special care on this flight."

The young man looked at him with innocent eyes.

" What's the excitement ? "

" You'll have nearly half a million pounds sterling worth of diamonds on board—that's the excitement," replied the superintendent, crushingly. " It's the biggest parcel of precious stones ever carried by air, and its safe arrival will be a stunt advertisement for this company, you understand ? You've got to get it there ! "

The pilot shrugged his shoulders.

" I'll get it there if I get there myself—and I have no particular desire to remain half-way, I can assure you. They can't be stolen, once we leave the ground—and my responsibility doesn't begin till then."

The superintendent nodded his head in agreement.

" No, they can't be stolen on the way, Elliott—and that's the reason we are carrying them. These international diamond thieves have been getting so busy of late that the owners are scared of train and steamer transit. Once you're up in the air they're safe till you come down again, that's a sure thing—and we've staked our reputation that you won't come down until you get to Amsterdam. The company is relying on you," he finished grandiloquently.

" Righto ! " said the pilot. " I'll do my

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best. Where are the stones? In the luggage-hold?"

"No. The owners are sending a man with them." He looked around him. "Ah! there he goes!—I must just speak to him!"

He turned to hurry after a man carrying a small suit-case additionally attached to him by a steel chain that glinted in the sun, who approached the machine. Two other men accompanied him, one on each side, evidently as a protective escort. The superintendent paused for a final warning word back to the pilot ere he caught them up. "Don't forget, Elliott—we rely on you!"

The pilot smiled in quiet self-confidence, glanced at the weather-sky and then at his wrist-watch, threw away the stub of his cigarette, and walked to where his mechanic stood awaiting him at the foot of the ladder under the open trap-door forward of the wings.

"All serene, Thompson?" he asked, casually.

"All serene, sir," replied the mechanic. "She's tuned up fine this morning. We'll have a good trip."

"Sure," said the pilot, as he clambered up the ladder into the cramped cockpit, faced with dials, compasses, and gauges, and slid into his seat. The mechanic followed him, shut down the trap-door, and slid likewise into the left-side seat. The pilot tested his controls, started first one engine, then the other, kept them running gently, looked over the side of the cockpit in readiness for the signal to start.

The door was closed upon the passengers in the saloon-interior of the aeroplane, and they glanced, curiously or diffidently according to their natures, at each other in the moment of suspense while they were still stationary. There were ten of them, all men, each in his wicker chair at a window of the saloon, five on one side and five on the other, with a narrow gangway between. Their expressions varied considerably. Those who had made air-journeys before leaned back in their chairs and spread their legs with a great assumption of experienced confidence. Those whose first trip it was shifted uneasily and smiled rather sheepishly from faces that were rather white. The man with the suit-case carried it poised upon his knees, his fingers tight upon the handle, and looked stonily in front of him, as though, in the preoccupation of his great responsibility, he was oblivious of his fellow-passengers. The couple of men in front of him, who occupied the forward seat on each side, joked amiably with each other. Some of the other passengers frowned, feeling this levity ill-timed in the solemn silence which filled what was, perhaps, their last minute of safe contact with the earth.

Despite their protracted anticipation, the moment of departure was unexpected when it arrived. A startling blast of violent, all-swallowing noise from engines suddenly accelerated smote the hearts of the nervous passengers with a pang of sharply enhanced apprehension. The roar of the whirring propellers, of the open exhausts from feverishly working cylinders, swelled and broadened as in opening circles of excessive sound, gathering force and volume from instant to instant—maintained itself for a moment or two at a level pitch of intensity that seemed to devastate the senses—leaped yet again to an incredible vehemence. There was a slight bump. They were moving. Ten pairs of eyes looked out of the windows, saw the green field flitting past them, its grass still reassuringly close, its inequalities felt in a series of muffled shocks, but overrun too quickly for vision. Then the trees beyond the aerodrome gyrated swiftly backwards. They were turning. Their speed slackened. One of the engines muted itself suddenly, leaped again with equal suddenness to its full, deep-toned roar. With one last spasm of violently intensified sound, of energy at a maximum of effort, they felt themselves rush over the field at vertiginous speed, bumped twice, thrice—bumped no more. The field at which they stared dropped away from them, the line of hangars sank into safe depression below them as they neared it with apparent recklessness, the trees beyond the aerodrome were suddenly close, small objects foreshortened on a widened landscape—the passengers gripped at their chairs as they nosed down and rose again gently, in a drop and lift upon the slopes of invisible quiet waves, heeled to one side and steadied once more, slowly turning above a diminished world with which they had lost contact.

Cut off from their fellows by the now evenly maintained roar which beat stunningly upon their ears to the obvious exclusion of conversation, the travellers stared out of their windows, lost themselves in the interest of contemplating an unfamiliar world too toylike ever to have been their real habitation. To the patchwork of fields in the vicinity of the aerodrome, absurdly and unworkably small in their cramped quadrilaterals of confining hedges, succeeded suburbs with masses of toy houses neatly blocked-out in squares and crescents and triangles by clearly-defined roads on which diminutive traffic actually moved. Churches, in all the variations of real architecture, lifted midget steeples far below them. Complete railway systems, with a multiplicity of sidings, equipped to the last detail with signals and bridges and railway stations, with moving model trains emitting real

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steam in exquisite imitation of the real thing, lay flat for their superior vision. They lost the sense of their own speed in the uniform droning roar of the engines which drove them onward. All this silent toy-world seemed to drift slowly beneath them, diminishing imperceptibly as they rose to yet higher levels.

London spread itself beneath them, bisected by the shiningly sinuous snake of the Thames broadening to its head, invisible in the haze far in front, itself veiled by patches of smoke-fog here and there, charted out in a surprising neatness between its main streets, reduced to a scale which permitted recognition only of its most salient features, lost behind them almost as soon as perceived. They left the broad curves of the river to their right, floated, it seemed—so complete was the absence of all shock or friction in this comfortable saloon—over suburbs that thinned into the fields, over fields that succeeded fields in an infinite variation of greens and browns, over small towns clearly islanded in agricultural country, over woods too tiny to seem worth conserving, over long, empty roads thinly ribboned between the patchwork countryside on which occasional motor-cars crawled like insects. Their speed was only vivid to them when they noticed yet again the bird-like shadow flitting far below over ploughland and pasture and realized that it was their own.

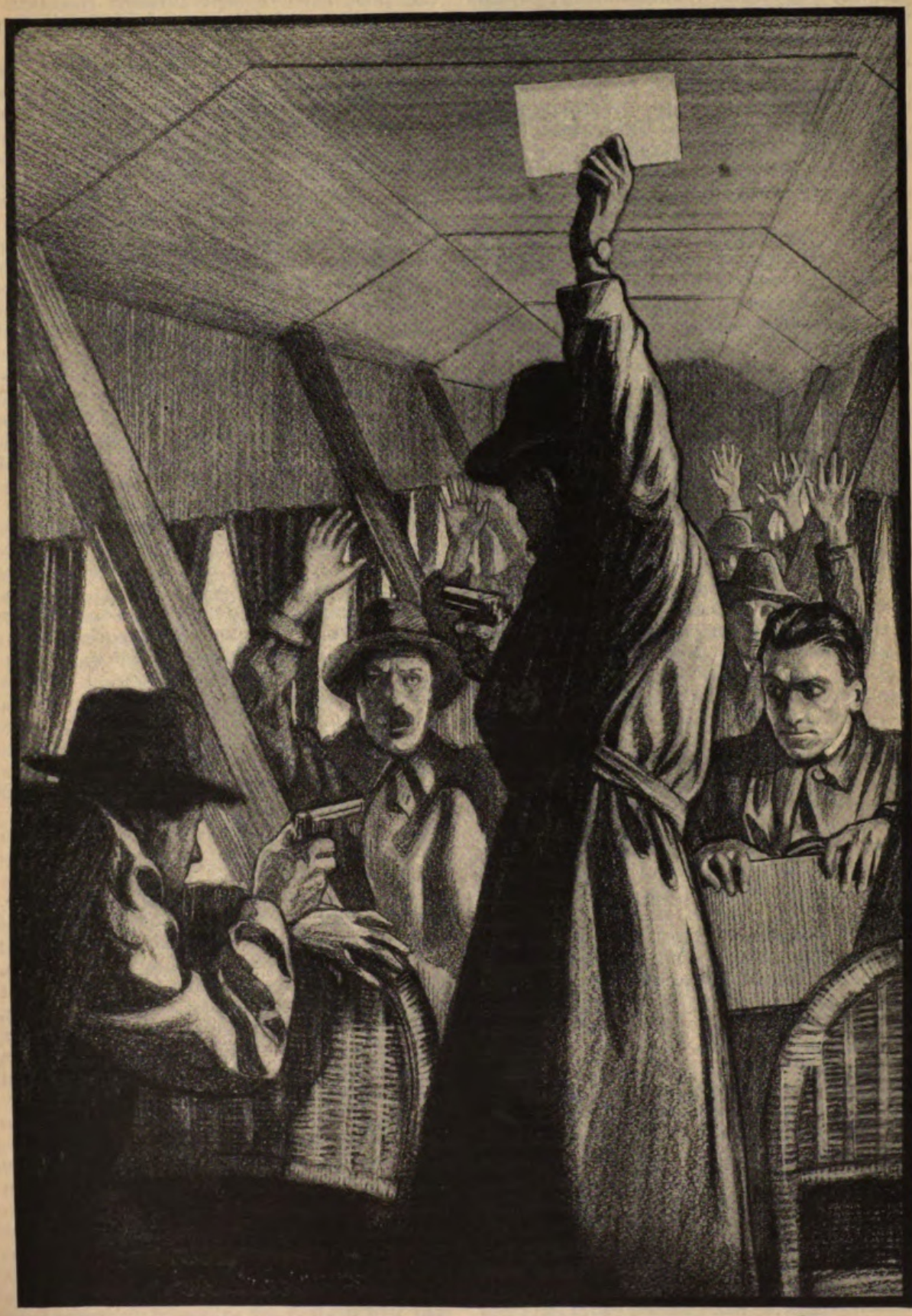
The time passed unremarked in the all-drowning roar of the engines, so monotonously maintained that it seemed like an enveloping silence which, here aloft, walled them off from the normal mensuration of terrestrial things, and still the passengers sat absorbed and solitary in their downward contemplation. On a level keel, any variations in height so gently made and corrected that they were imperceptible, the aeroplane roared onwards, profiting by the fresh south-westerly wind. One of the passengers, detaching his gaze from the panorama below, produced a pocket-compass and checked their course. It was east-north-east. The spell of solitary absorption broken by his action, he touched the fellow-passenger seated in front of him and showed him the dial, with a dumb-show gesture of comment. The other man smiled companionably and pointed downwards. They were leaving a thinly foam-fringed coast of pale yellow beaches, drifting over a green-blue ocean where a myriad wave-facets scintillated in the sun. The two men leaned close together and shouted the obvious in a desperate effort at conversation—the North Sea!

The other passengers, vaguely conscious of this breaking of individual isolation, looked round from their windows. One or two of them, ceding to the gregarious instinct hitherto repressed, imitated these pioneers and mouthed ineffectual words supplemented with a smile and nod. It was really very comfortable in this saloon, so comfortable in its solid construction, in its luxurious equipment, that the sense of insecurity thus high in the air was lulled into abeyance. They glanced about them, appraised their environment, their companions, with perceptions no longer blurred by the uneasiness of the moments preceding departure. Electric-lamp brackets provided for the contingency of a flight unduly prolonged into the hours of darkness. A little door in the after-wall led, by its indication, to a lavatory. Another little door, in the forward end, marked "Private," "Entrée Interdite," 'Ingang Verboden," aroused a vague curiosity by its suggestion of guarded mystery. As a matter of fact, it opened into a small compartment containing the petrol-tanks, pressure-pumps, etc., and thence communicated with the cockpit where the pilot and mechanic sat, in the open, behind their little glass wind-screens. But the passengers in the saloon, their vision bounded by their own immediate comfort, had no more thought of the pilot who conducted them than the traveller in a first-class railway coach has of the engine-driver.

They surveyed each other now with some interest, secretly surprised perhaps to find each other so normal in these unwonted conditions. One or two wrote notes on pieces of paper and passed them to each other, renouncing the excessive effort of verbal conversation. Only the man with the suit-case on his knees remained stonily indifferent to his companions, absorbed in his own thoughts. The two men in the front seats nodded and smiled to each other in the exchange of some idea readily comprehensible to both.

The taller of the pair looked down through his window—they were now over wide sea, dotted with small craft, the coast-line far behind—and then rose, with a languid twist of shoulders fatigued by long immobility, to his feet. The other passengers watched him with a mild curiosity. He smiled pleasantly at them—a keen-faced young man with steel-grey eyes under well-marked brows—showing white teeth under his little moustache as his lips parted. So quietly confident, so engaging, was his smile, that some of the other passengers smiled back, involuntarily, in response. They watched him, with the concentrated, if unillumined, interest of minds undistracted by any other happening in this confined space, as, with a calm deliberation, he extracted a fair-sized card from one of his pockets. His companion had turned in his chair, sat twisted to face the other passengers, a quiet smile on his face also. Eight

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"THE MAN SUDDENLY HELD UP THE CARD. THERE WERE WORDS ON IT—TWO AMAZING WORDS—'HANDS UP!'"

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pairs of eyes turned automatically to the white card in the hand of the man who stood erect at the end of the saloon, his right hand in his jacket pocket. They might have been an audience at a conjuring trick as they sat there motionless in vague half-expectation of his next movement. The man suddenly held up the card with its face towards them. There were words on it in heavy black type—two words—two amazing words—"HANDS UP!"

Eight pairs of eyes stared uncomprehendingly at this legend, unable for the moment to connect themselves with it. Then, with a variety of sudden facial gesture, eight pairs of eyes found themselves staring as if mesmerized into the muzzles of two automatic pistols, one in the hand of the man who leaned over the back of his chair smiling at them, one in the hand of the man who held the card aloft. The man with the card had ceased to smile; he tapped his announcement significantly with the barrel of his weapon. To those startled passengers it seemed as though the earth had stopped. They forgot the aeroplane in which they were, they forgot everything except the menace of those utterly unexpected pistols. The man with the card smiled grimly and levelled his weapon at the breast of his nearest neighbour. Seven pairs of hands shot up above seven heads. The eighth man sat with his hands stubbornly clasped over the handle of the suit-case on his knees.

The man leaning over the chair-back ran his eyes over the surrendered crowd, marked the recalcitrant, pointed to him with an indicative motion of his pistol, significantly poised, and smiled with meaning. His lips uttered a word inaudible in the roar of the engines, but clearly deducible from their rounded protrusion—"*You!*" The man with the suit-case sat rigid, hands tight over his precious charge, and stared defiantly into the eyes that threatened him.

For a moment or two the group remained posed as for a tableau: the man on his feet still holding up his card; the man leaning over the chair-back still smiling grimly; both with their pistols levelled on their companions; seven pairs of arms held awkwardly aloft; and the eighth man stubborn in a frozen immobility where only his eyes were alive. He had, obviously, no chance. Even protest would have been inaudible. The aeroplane roared onward over the wide expanse of sea far, far below, immensely too high for any jump of escape. They were isolated with their prey, these two well-dressed bandits who smiled with a grim suavity as they dandled their pistols and traversed them over the frightened little crowd. No communication was possible with the pilot even, except through that little door, and they were between it and their victims.

The second man rose lazily to his feet. He nodded to that defiant eighth man with a significant smile which assured him that he would be dealt with in due course, and took a step to the man who sat, hands above his head, in the nearest chair. The victim's eyes bulged with fright as the other man waved his pistol in front of him with a gesture that commanded him to stand up. The confederate ran deft hands through his pockets, produced nothing, shrugged his shoulders, pushed him down into his seat again. He passed to the next man, repeated the procedure, and returned him also to his seat unpillaged. Each of the seven men with their hands above their heads was similarly dealt with, and upon one only was found the article evidently sought—a revolver, which was promptly annexed. Then the pair of confederates, assured against interruption, turned to the man with the suit-case.

He sat absolutely motionless, his hands clenched over the handle in an intensity of grip which whitened the skin between his knuckles. His face was set doggedly in a determination so fixed that he seemed almost unconscious of the man who threatened him. Only his eyes betrayed a silent agony, terrible to look upon, as they stared straight in front of him. The two men stood over him, pistols levelled, and the eyes of all the other passengers turned to watch, fascinated, this drama which played itself soundlessly in the all-drowning roar of the engines which hurried them high above the sea.

One of the confederates tapped him on the shoulder as though recalling him to consciousness. The man's eyes turned from their vacant contemplation to look his adversary straight in the face. They continued to confront him even when the pistol levelled itself at his temple. Deathly pale though he was, not a muscle of his face moved. It was evident that he was exercising all his will-power in a supreme effort, fidelity to his trust a part of himself, hopeless though was his position. The grip upon his suit-case did not relax in the slightest.

The other passengers held their breath as they watched this silent duel. In that suit-case, evidently, was the booty desired by these daring robbers. Nothing else had been taken. They thrilled with a horrible fascination as they saw the pistol come down and press its muzzle tight upon the back of one of the hands that held it.

"*One!*" The word was inaudible in the roar which filled the saloon, its purport only guessed after an instant of deduction from the lip-gesture which produced it.

"*Two!*" The man with the suit-case did

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not blench. His eyes, fixed terribly upon his tormentor, never wavered.

"*Three!*" The crack of the pistol was a dull detonation in the ceaseless roar that swallowed all other sounds, the victim's involuntary yell of pain a cry but faintly heard. The watching passengers, drooping the tired arms still above their heads, saw him sink back in his chair, deathly white. He had fainted.

The two confederates had evidently thought out their plan in every detail. Without a moment's hesitation, one of them produced a file. The chain attaching the suit-case to the messenger's body was cut through in a few minutes of dexterous work.

Then, with a callous indifference to their victim's condition, they left him and went with their plunder to the forward end of the saloon. The man who had exhibited the card turned to the passengers and made a smiling gesture of "wash-out." The terrified little crowd dropped their aching arms. What was coming next? How did these two brigands propose to get away with the goods? The question asked itself in seven terrified minds, anguished in a new apprehension of further danger for themselves. The eighth man still lay back in a swoon, blood dropping from his hand to the floor.

The pair of thieves, however, did not seem in the least concerned. They smiled at each other contentedly, exchanged a word shouted close into each other's ears, and nodded mutual acquiescence. Then one of them placed the suit-case on the floor and sat down in his chair again as though nothing had happened.

The other man opened the little door which led forward and disappeared through it.

Out in the cockpit the pilot sat behind his little wind-screen and steered his course through the air that rushed by his head in a roar that mingled with the roar of the engines above and behind him on either hand, a roar that was heard, though muffled, through the close-fitting cap that came down over his ears, all other sounds excluded. Concentrated upon his task, his muscles moved almost automatically in control of the wheel-topped "joy-stick" that pivoted on its ball-and-socket base as he corrected the deviations, lateral and perpendicular, which registered themselves in a swing of the pointers of the floating compass and the aneroid close under his eyes.

Patches of rain-cloud, torn and heaped by that south-west wind, hung over the sea and he drove into them, moist fogs in which the sense of direction was lost, with faculties quick to perceive any alteration of his level in the changes of atmospheric temperature accompanying them. His arms ached with "holding up" the heavy machine, which tended to drive forward clumsily in the air-pockets frequent in this stretch of unsettled weather. From time to time the mechanic at his side, posted in vigilant observation of the gauges upon the dashboard, got up silently—conversation quite impossible in this blast of wind—and crept back to the compartment in rear to attend to the pressure-pumps regulating the flow of petrol and lubrication.

For a longer period than usual the pilot had sat with the seat at his side vacant. He began to speculate uneasily upon possible causes for the mechanic's protracted absence. Had anything gone wrong behind there? He looked at the gauges, saw that they were normal—half-turned his head in a difficult twist from his cramped seat in a questing, but fruitless, glance to the rear. The machine plunged slightly sideways in this relaxation of his control. He pulled her up, renounced the effort to see behind him, concentrated himself for a straight course through the stretch of grey cloud that massed itself upon their track. Fog-wisps flew past him, collected on the wind-screen in beads and runlets of moisture that distorted vision.

Ah! at last—Thompson had returned! Without diverting his gaze from his instruments, essential for guidance in this dense fog, he felt the contact of the body that slid into the seat beside him. Confound this clumsy machine!—he cursed to himself as he pulled the wheel close to him in denial of a swing-round of the needle on the aneroid, glanced to the half-gyrating compass-card. A piece of paper was being pushed across it—Good! Thompson's explanation of the irregularity which had detained him. No! What the——? Utterly bewildered, he read: "*Obey orders or I shoot—fly machine myself.*"

Good Lord! Had Thompson gone mad? He glanced quickly to his left, saw—not Thompson, but a stranger with a young, determined face, the hair of his capless head fluttering in the wind—saw a revolver levelled at his eyes. The machine plunged heavily in his shock of astonishment.

He righted it, glanced again at the stranger. The man nodded emphatically, gesticulated with his mouth, tapped the written message with his left hand, while with the other he held his weapon levelled dangerously. Who in Hades was this? What had happened to Thompson? His brain worked with the quickness of one trained to lightning thought in a school of air-warfare where instantaneous deductions and decisions were vital—those diamonds! But what had happened to Thompson? Thompson was in fact lying stunned in the compartment by the pressure-pumps, but the pilot imagined worse things.

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He thrilled in a sudden revival of old combative instincts. To blazes with this fellow!

He glanced again at him, saw his mouth frame, emphatically, the words, "*I shoot!*" his eyes flash a stern confirmation of the threat. What was to be done? He could not take his hands from the controls, grapple with this interloper. He thought of the passengers, their lives dependent on him, and was savagely perplexed.

Another scrap of paper was pushed under his eyes. "*Alter course due north—or I shoot.*" Due north! That was out to sea, away from the Dutch coast which they were now nearing! Should he refuse—hold on his course at all costs? He felt the muzzle of that pistol press against the cheek-leather of his helmet.

Lives were more precious than diamonds—he banked her round in a slow left-hand turn. They shot out of the fog, roared on between white clouds on a level with them, high above green-blue water mottled with tiny foam-flecks. He glanced over the side to the sea below. It was empty of any shipping except in a far distance. No—what was that long, thin streak of white foam trailed across the waves, a dark spot at its head? From their altitude of three thousand feet it was difficult to distinguish clearly the nature of that tiny craft a long way in front of them to the north. Was it to meet this boat that he had been ordered to change his course?

"*Drop two thousand*"—another message was pushed under his eyes. He hesitated for a moment, then put her head down in a furious suddenness. They plunged headlong with an abruptness that lifted his stomach in the sudden change of equilibrium. In a long, long rushing nose-dive, his weight thrown forward upon the "joy-stick," they raced down, engines roaring, towards the sea. The pilot smiled grimly. The passengers behind would be sliding out of their chairs, terrified in a prospect of imminent disaster, The man at his side, thrown forward also, tugged frantically at his arm.

The sea was close under them, its waves curiously large. He pulled the wheel of the controlling lever close into him suddenly, threw his weight back, "held her up" with all his strength. Her nose came up on the bottom curve of an ellipse, and she shot skyward once more like a rocket. The pilot grimly sacrificed the ease of mind of his passengers. His one hope was to shake the nerves of the threatening individual at his side. If only he dared to loop! He speculated for a moment on the strength of the roof above the saloon. Would it bear the weight of nine men suddenly flung upon it? He could not risk it.

The face of the man at his side came suddenly into close contact with his own, its mouth distorted in a full-lunged shout. He just caught the words, "*Quit fooling!*" A left hand clutched at the wheel and the right hand once more brought the pistol into dangerous proximity. He flattened out their soaring, full-engined, skyward rush at a couple of thousand feet.

"*Down!*" shouted the just-heard voice. "*Down!*"

Under the menace of that pistol he dropped her on a steady slant to a thousand, flattened out again at a sign from the man at his side. His one chance, it was obvious to him, was to assume an implicit obedience, ready in the meanwhile to snatch any opportunity of escape that might present itself.

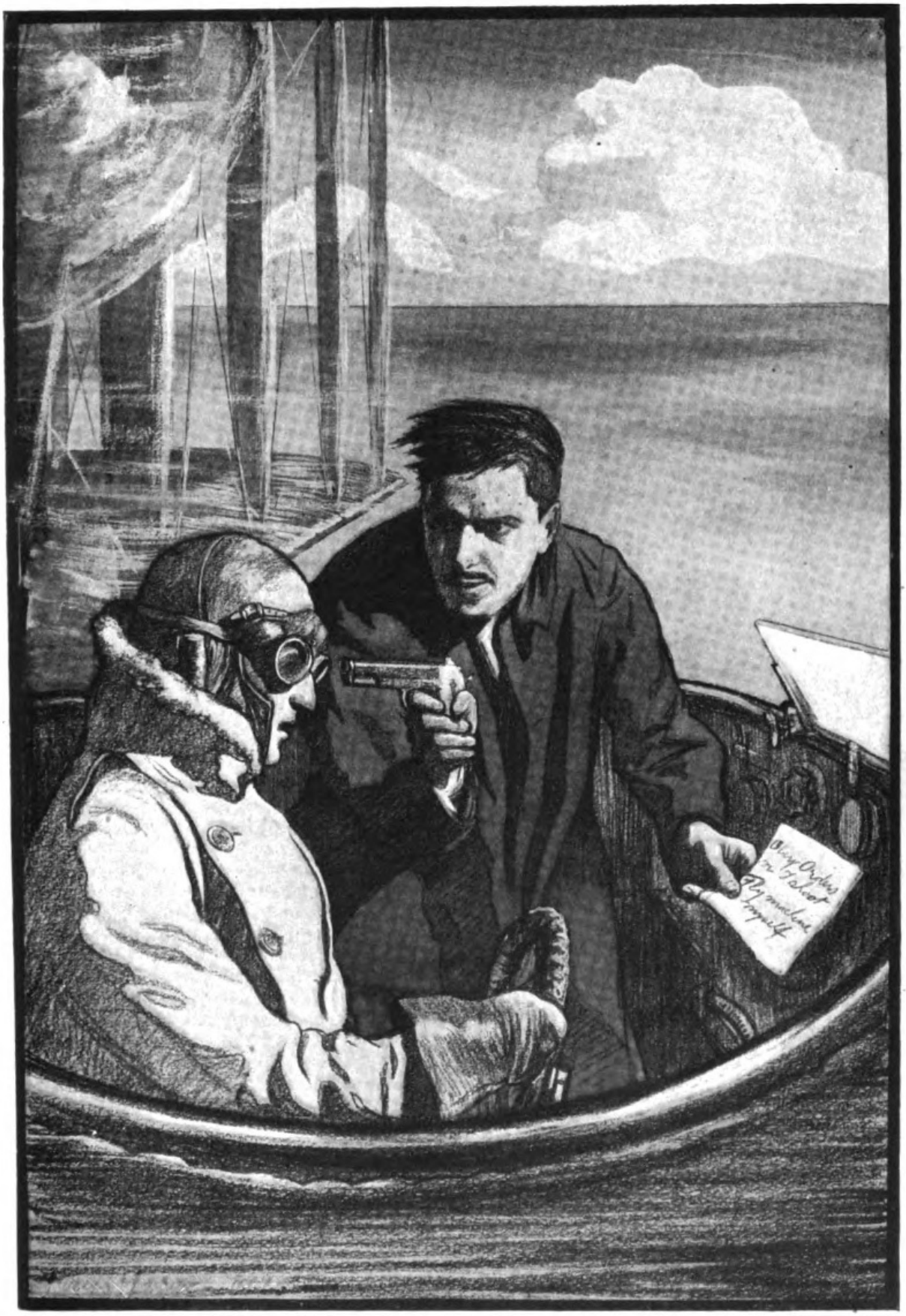
Both men glanced over the side to the sea below. The small craft was close under them, now clearly defined as a swift motor-boat of considerable size. The man in the left-hand seat, still covering the pilot with his weapon, pulled out a Very pistol with his left hand and fired into the air. A star of intense white light shone out suddenly against the blue, sunlit sky, and sank downwards. An answering rocket shot up from the motor-boat that swerved round to follow them.

The pilot obeyed a tug on his arm that commanded him to circle. His captor looked away from him over the side, in an evident computation of distances. The pistol in his right hand, no longer controlled by direct vision of its possible target, waved vaguely at a harmless angle. It was the momentary chance. Abandoning the wheel with his right hand, the pilot reached over in a sudden movement and snatched the weapon, flung it wide overboard.

Then, before his adversary could realize what had happened, he put the machine up on a long, full-powered slant to the south-east, away from the boat below.

A second later a couple of hands were round his throat, choking the life out of him. Suffocating, in an agony of reaction against this throttling-grip, one hand tearing vainly at those which constricted him remorselessly, he fought to keep his consciousness, to keep the machine, with his one free hand, on the upward course whose correctness he, with his head pushed back out of vision of the dashboard, could only determine with the sixth sense of long custom in the air. The machine banked, side-slipped dangerously, and still that grip upon his throat continued unrelaxed. In a flash of intuition at crisis, he understood his adversary's game. He would let her fall into the sea, certain himself of being rescued with his loot—what had happened in the saloon behind?—by the motor-boat evidently at a rendezvous. The

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"UTTERLY BEWILDERED, HE READ: 'OBEY ORDERS OR I SHOOT FLY MACHINE MYSELF.'"

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pilot, feeling his heart swell to bursting in his suffocated breast, tugged blindly and desperately at the controls with both hands, felt the machine right herself once more.

Then, entirely abandoning the wheel for a moment, his head singing in a whirl of the senses, he made a supreme effort to rid himself of his adversary's grip, half-rising, in blind reaction, from his seat. The machine, uncontrolled, dived suddenly seawards in an awful spin. The pilot, on the verge of fainting, felt her go—felt that the end had come. His hands drooped powerlessly to fumble for the controls.

Suddenly, incredibly, the pressure on his throat ceased. In his first long, full breath of delicious new life, he glanced round with eyes that ached from their sockets, whilst an automatic self seized possession of the controls, struggled desperately to pull the machine out of this fatal, giddy spin. What had happened? Intent, in the urgency of the brief moment or two that separated them from a headlong plunge into the sea, upon a task that demanded all his skill, he only half-glimpsed that it was now his adversary who leaned back, gasping, choking, garrotted from behind.

Thompson? The thought flashed through his mind as, a few feet only above waves that lifted themselves in a run of mobile water where sky had been, the machine suddenly flattened herself into a level course, shot up once more in answer to his tug at the wheel-topped lever. The motor-boat appeared, startlingly close, issuing from under her in a smother of flying foam, oilskin-clad men waving frantically from her hooded deck in expostulation at this threatened crash upon them.

Thompson? He glanced again. No. He saw a horribly mangled hand, black with an explosion and with congealed blood, stretch itself forward from behind, grope over the face of the choking man. He glanced round still farther, saw that a handkerchief was tightly round the throat of his late adversary, saw that its ends were being drawn back with all the strength of a strange man, who thrust his knee into his victim's back and grinned with a horrible exultation of glutted hatred.

The throttled man went over backwards suddenly.

Prior to that first rushing nose-dive, before there was anything to indicate any abnormality in the control of the machine, the passengers in the saloon, left with the man who had taken possession of the suit-case, were too absorbed in the fascination of watching his preparations for disposing of it to notice that its late owner, still apparently in a swoon, was watching also through half-opened eyes. His pistol ostentatiously in readiness on his confederate's chair, the quietly self-possessed brigand occupied himself with attaching two large indiarubber bladders to the suit-case and then inflating them. This done, he produced what was evidently a silken parachute, still closed, and tied it firmly to the handle. Those watching passengers, still too frightened to move, had no difficulty in deducing his intentions. Obviously, he was going to drop the suit-case overboard.

Then came the nose-dive, which sent them all tumbling out of their chairs into a heap upon the floor. The thief, bent over the suit-case, went first, too suddenly surprised to have a chance of retaining his equilibrium. As he sprawled, the man hitherto sunk back in his chair hurled himself upon him, went down with him, his hand groping for the pistol. He seized it by the barrel, struck viciously with the butt upon his enemy's head.

The aeroplane soared up again, righted itself to an even keel. The passengers staggered back to their seats, saw the injured man rising from the prostrate body of his adversary. He retrieved his suit-case, handed it to the guardianship of an emphatically-gesticulating passenger, who grinned his courage now that the danger was past, handed him also the pistol for protection in case the stunned man should recover. Then, stumbling and lurching in the now eccentric movements of the machine, he opened the little door in the saloon wall and disappeared into the forward compartment.

A firm of diamond merchants in Amsterdam gave the pilot the dinner of his life that night.

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The Uncharted Coast



by A. CONAN DOYLE

No. III.—THE SHADOWS ON THE SCREEN.

THERE is nothing more wonderful, more incredible, and at the same time, as it seems to me, more certain, than that past events may leave a record upon our surroundings which is capable of making itself felt, heard, or seen for a long time afterwards. I have put the impressions in the order of their frequency, for it is more common to feel the past than to hear it and more common to hear it than to see it. Houses which are haunted by vague noises are more common than those which possess apparitions, and families have been persecuted for years by poltergeists who have never once caught a glimpse of their tormentors.

A sensitive mind is easily affected in any place where there has been recent trouble. A lady of my acquaintance called recently upon the matron of a hospital and found that she was not in her room. "Mrs. Dodson has gone out," said the nurse. "Has she had bad news?" "Yes, she has just had a wire that her husband is very ill." How did my friend know that there had been bad news? She felt it by a sinking of her own heart as she entered the room, before the nurse had arrived. "Telepathy!" says the parrot. Well, if Telepathy can be stretched to mean that a thought or emotion can not only be flashed from brain to brain, but that it can remain stationary for an hour and then impress itself upon any sensitive who approached it, then I will not quarrel with the word. But if for an hour why not for a year, and if for a year why not for a century? There is a record on the screen—when this particular little cubic space of ether, if Professor Einstein will still permit the expression, may retain indefinitely some intimate and lasting change which marks and can even faintly reproduce the emotion which a human being has endured within it.

I had a friend who lived in a century-old house. His wife, who was sensitive, was continually aware of a distinct push when she came down the stairs, always occurring upon the same step. Afterwards it was discovered that an old lady who had formerly lived in the house received a playful push from some frolicsome child, and lost her balance, falling down the stair. It is not necessary to believe that some hobgoblin lingered upon that stair continually repeating the fatal action. The probable explanation seems to be that the startled mind of the old woman as she felt herself falling left some permanent effect behind it which could still be discerned in this strange fashion.

THE EFFECTS OF OLD BATTLEFIELDS.

Invisible air records of this sort would explain many things which are now inexplicable. Men of strong nerve have been known to be terrified in certain localities without being able to give any reason. Some horror of the past, unseen by their eyes, may still have impressed their senses. One does not need to be very psychic to get the same result upon an old battlefield. I am by no means psychic myself, and yet I am conscious, quite apart from imagination, of a curious effect, almost a darkening of the

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landscape with a marked sense of heaviness, when I am on an old battlefield. I have been particularly conscious of it on the scenes of Hastings and Culloden, two fights where great causes were finally destroyed and where extreme bitterness may well have filled the hearts of the conquered. The shadow still remains. A more familiar example of the same faculty is the gloom which gathers over the mind of even an average person upon entering certain houses. The most rabid agitator need not envy our nobility their stately old castles, for it is happier to spend one's life in the simplest cottage, uncontaminated by psychic disturbance, than to live in the grandest mansion which still preserves the gloomy taints that hang about rooms once perhaps the scene of cruelty or other vices.

If a sensitive is able to feel some record of a past event, then there is evidence that by an extension of this process one who is still more sensitive would actually see the person who left the impression. That it is the actual person in spirit is in most cases utterly incredible to me. That the victim of some century-old villainy should still in her ancient garments frequent in person the scene of her former martyrdom is, indeed, hard to believe. It is more credible, little as we understand the details, that some thought-form is shed and remains visible, at the spot where great mental agony has been endured. How and why are questions which will be solved by our descendants. If we could conceive that we have form within form like the skins of an onion, that the outer skin should peel off under the influence of emotion and continue a mechanical existence at that spot while the rest of the organism passed on and never even missed it, such a supposition, farcical as it appears, would match the recorded facts better than anything else I know. Each fresh discarded skin of the onion would be a fresh thought-form, and our track through life would be marked in its more emotional crises by a long trail of such forms. Grotesque as the idea may seem, I can confidently say that the true explanation when it arrives will prove to be not less so.

THOUGHT-FORMS OF THE PAST.

Let us now take some definite examples where this thought-form of the past has manifested itself. I do not know a better case than that which is recorded by the late Miss Goodrich-Freer, a lady who combined a steady nerve and cool judgment with a temperament which was conservative to the point of incredulity. She slept in a room in Hampton Court Palace which had a record of haunting, and she tells us very clearly what occurred. No unprejudiced person could possibly read the original narrative without being absolutely convinced that the facts were even as stated.

It was a small bedroom without curtains, with one door close by the bed. It is characteristic of the lady that she spent her vigil—she had come in the hope of seeing the apparition—by reading Lord Farrer's article, "Shall we degrade our standard of value?" In spite of the reading, or possibly on account of it, she fell asleep, and was awakened some hours later by sounds of movement. It was quite dark, and some detaining force seemed to prevent her from reaching for the matches. A question received no reply. Suddenly there appeared a soft point of light in the gloom, which glowed and spread, until it became the figure of a tall, slight woman, moving slowly across the room. She stopped at the farther side and the observer was able to get a clear view of her profile. "Her face was insipidly pretty, that of a woman from thirty to thirty-five years of age, her figure slight, her dress of a dark soft material, having a full skirt and broad sash or waistband tied high up, a crossed or draped kerchief over the shoulders, sleeves which I noticed fitted very tight below the elbow, and hair which was dressed so as not to lie flat on the head." A second question addressed to this figure produced no effect. She raised her thin white hands, sank upon her knees, buried her face in the palms, and appeared to pray. Then the light went out and the scene was over. The impression left upon the observer's mind by the action and attitude was that of reproach, and yet of gentle resignation. Her own nerves were so entirely unaffected by the incident that she has left it on record that she spent part of the remainder of the night in reading Myer's "Drift of Psychical Research."

Such an experience, and it is one of a very numerous class, can hardly be explained rationally upon any spiritual or upon any physical basis. Granting the fact, and there is no sane alternative but to grant it, we cannot conceive that this unfortunate woman has really for a century or more occupied herself in walking across a room in which some great trouble may have befallen her in her earth-life. From her appearance one would judge that she was more sinned against than sinning. Why, then, should any just dispensation condemn her to so strange, monotonous, and useless a fate? If we can conceive, however, that it is some shadow of herself which was detached in old days of trouble and still lingers, then certainly the matter becomes more clear, if she herself is happy elsewhere. Such a shadow, like most psychic phenomena, might well seem luminous to one who, like Miss Goodrich-Freer, had herself some clairvoyant gifts.

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If you ask, however, why such a thought-form should only come at certain hours, I am compelled to answer that I do not know.

A similar first-hand example may be drawn from Mrs. Tweedale's recent book, "Ghosts I Have Seen," which, under its popular title, contains a most extraordinary record of actual first-hand psychic experiences. Mrs. Tweedale is an admirable witness, for she, like Miss Goodrich-Freer, is herself clairvoyante, and yet retains a very sane and critical judgment, while her personal reputation and position give us every confidence in her statements. Materialists will never fairly face the obvious alternative that such first-hand accounts either mean that a person of honour has suddenly burst into a perfect orgy of objectless lying, or else that the statements are true. When a clairvoyante can clearly describe her own experiences the book becomes of great value, and I would only name Turvey's "Beginnings of Seership" among the more recent works as equalling Mrs. Tweedale's in personal knowledge.



"SHE RAISED HER THIN WHITE HANDS, SANK UPON HER KNEES, BURIED HER FACE IN THE PALMS, AND APPEARED TO PRAY."

MRS. TWEEDALE'S VISION.

The writer at one time lived in an old house in the West-end of London. It was a winter night, and she was lying half asleep when she heard a sound as of the crackling of parchment, and opening her eyes she saw a man

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seated in a chair in front of the fire. He was dressed in a uniform reminiscent of Nelson's days, with brass buttons, wore powdered hair with a black bow, and was staring rigidly into the glow, while he held crumpled up in his right hand some sort of document. He was a stately and handsome figure. For some hours he sat there, the fire gleaming, when it spurted up, upon the buckles and buttons of his dress. Finally, in the small hours of the morning he vanished gradually away. Several times later the lady saw the same apparition, and it might well be argued that it was constantly there, but that its perception depended upon the condition of the clairvoyante. Finally some religious exorcism was performed in the room and the vision was not seen again.

This case clearly fits itself into the hypothesis advanced here, of a form-picture being thrown out at a time of emotion. The parchment document suggests a will or some other paper of importance which the officer has prepared or received, but which in either case may have caused him so much mental stress as he brooded over it in front of the fire that he threw this permanent record upon the screen of time. The accompaniment of appropriate sound is very general in such cases. Difficult as my hypothesis may seem, we have to remember that the only conceivable other explanations would be either that the man's self was there in front of the fire after a century of spirit-life, or that his thoughts in the spirit-world concerning an episode in his earth-life were so constant and vivid that they conjured up a picture in the room. The latter explanation might be accepted for a single episode, but when it is a constant matter, and when one remembers how many other reminiscences of earth-life such a man must have had, it is difficult to consider it seriously.

An experience which comes under the same heading is narrated by Lady Reay in the same enthralling volume. She was sleeping in an ancient dwelling with a somewhat sinister reputation, so we may admit that her mind was prepared to see a ghost. The actual form of the phantom was so definite, and so exactly similar to that seen by independent witnesses at different times in the same room, that it could hardly be a figment of the brain. She was awakened by moaning. The room was in total darkness, but at one side was a circle of light, like that thrown by a magic lantern. This seems to be the psychic illumination, as seen by Miss Goodrich-Freer in the case already quoted. Several clairvoyants who habitually see it describe it as being of a metallic yellow. In this circle of radiance was seen a woman dressed as in the Tudor period, walking round the apartment, throwing herself occasionally against the wall, like a desperate bird in a cage, and moaning terribly. There was no record, so far as I know, as to who this unhappy lady may have been, but she was seen independently before Lady Reay saw her, but without Lady Reay's knowledge, by Captain Eric Streatfield when he was a little boy. I do not understand how one can disregard such testimony as this. Such incredulity may be described as scientific caution, but to those who are really aware of the weight of evidence now existing it must appear mere obstinacy and obtuseness. When one thinks of the importance of psychic knowledge, and compares it with that of the bending of the light from the Hyades as it passes the Sun, one can but marvel at the want of proportion which exalts the physical while it neglects the spiritual.

An adventure which occurred to a friend of mine seems to come under this heading. His family had rented an old country house in which Nell Gwynne had been kept when she was the mistress of Charles II. One evening, as he descended the stairs, he saw cross the hall a figure which was very like a family nurse, whom we will call "Nannie." He cried out "Nannie!" in surprise and followed her, but could find no trace. Inquiry proved that the servant was not in the house or in the neighbourhood. My friend amused himself by fitting up the house with as many old prints of Nell Gwynne as he could collect. One day his sister visited him, and after inspecting these pictures she exclaimed: "Have you ever observed how like Nell Gwynne is to our Nannie?" There is, of course, a chance of coincidence here, but at least there is a strong suggestion that poor Nell, wearied and miserable, with her heart aching for the bustle of town, cast off some thought-form as a permanent record of her emotion.

In all these cases there has been only one figure thrown upon the screen, but the matter becomes more complex when there is a group. This group consists in many cases of the wronger and the wronged, but as each may have been at the same pitch of emotion at the time of the deed, the theory of thought-forms being shed at such a time is not invalidated—and is, at any rate, more reasonable than to imagine that the guilty murderer and the innocent victim are involved in one common fate, which consists of an endless repetition of the tragedy which they once enacted. Such an idea seems to me a monstrous and unthinkable one.

"A VERY DRAMATIC CASE."

I would choose as a good example of the composite thought-form one which was recorded some years ago in the *Wide World*

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Magazine, which I have every reason to believe is founded on fact, though the name given, Grace Dundas, is a pseudonym, and the events occurred twenty years ago. In this very dramatic case a lady with her children occupied a lonely house upon the Cornish coast, and was much disturbed by a ghostly visitor who passed with a heavy tread up the stairs at a certain hour of the night, disappearing into a panel in the landing. The lady had the courage to lie in wait for him, and perceived him to be a small, aged man in a shabby tweed suit, carrying his boots in his hand. He emitted "a sort of yellow luminous light." This creature ascended at 1 a.m., and emerged again at 4.30, descending the stair with the same audible tread. The lady kept the matter to herself, but a nurse who was brought to tend one of the children came screaming in the middle of the night to say that there was "a dreadful old man" in the house. She had descended to the dining-room to get some water for her patient, and had seen him seated in a chair and taking off his boots. He was seen by his own light, for she had not had time to strike a match. The lady's brother and her husband both corroborated the phenomena, and the latter went very thoroughly into the matter. He found that under the house was a cellar which opened into a cave up which the water came at full tide. It was an ideal situation for a smuggler. That night the husband and wife kept watch in the cellar, where they saw a very terrible spectacle. In a light resembling that of the moon they were aware of two elderly men engaged in a terrific struggle. One got the other down and killed him, bundling the body through the door into the cave beyond. He then buried the knife with which the deed was done, though curiously enough this detail was only observed by the husband, who actually unearthed a knife afterwards at the spot. Both witnesses then saw the murderer pass them, and they followed him into the dining-room, where he drank some brandy, though this action was seen by the wife and not by the husband. He then took off his boots, exactly as the nurse had already described. With his boots in his hand he ascended the stairs and passed through the panel as he had done so often before, the inference being that on each previous occasion the scene in the cellar had preceded his advent.



"SHE SAW A MAN SEATED IN FRONT OF THE FIRE. HE WAS DRESSED IN A UNIFORM REMINISCENT OF NELSON'S DAYS."

Inquiry now showed that many years ago the house had been inhabited by two brothers who amassed considerable wealth by smuggling. They had hoarded their money in partnership, but one of them finally announced his intention of getting married, which involved his drawing his share of the treasure. Soon afterwards this brother disappeared, and it was rumoured that he had gone to sea upon a long voyage. So far as I remember, for I write with only notes of

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the episode before me, the other brother went mad, and the affair was never cleared up in his lifetime. It should be added that the panel into which the vision disappeared concealed a large cupboard, which might well have been the treasure house of the establishment. The graphic touch of the boots carried in the hand suggests that there was some housekeeper or other resident who might be disturbed by the sound of the murderer's footsteps.

In this case one can certainly imagine that in so fratricidal a strife there would be a peculiar intensity of emotion on the part of both the actors, which would leave a marked record if anything could do so. That the record was indeed very marked is shown by the fact that the sight was not reserved for people with psychic qualities, like the first two instances here recorded, but that everyone, the husband, the wife, and the nurse all saw the apparition, which must therefore have been particularly solid even after the lapse of so many years. It might, I think, be put forward as a hypothesis supplementary to that of thought-forms thrown off in times of crisis, that the permanency and solidity of the form depend upon the extremity of the emotion.

A second illustration may be drawn from Mrs. Tweedale's reminiscences. I am taking my cases from a limited number of books, for the sake of convenience in reference, but they are typical of very many others. The most absurd of the many absurd charges against Spiritualism is that it has no literature. It has actually a literature with which no other religion could attempt to compare, and it may safely be said that if an assiduous reader were to devour nothing else for fifty years he would be very far from having got to the end of it. Its quality is not on a par with its quantity, but even there I would undertake to name fifty books on the scientific and religious sides of Spiritualism which would outweigh in interest, dignity, and brain-power an equal list from any other philosophy. Yet the public is kept absolutely ignorant of the greater part of these remarkable works, many of which will one day be world-famous. The people who acted and wrote in the Apostolic epoch of the Christian Church little thought how their actions would appear two thousand years later, and certainly the supercilious philosophers and scandalized high priests would have been much astonished to know of the changed values which time has created.

A HAUNTED SHOOTING-LODGE.

To return, however, to the further illustration, it concerns the doings in a shooting-lodge in Argyllshire, inhabited in 1901 by Major and Mrs. Stewart, the latter being the sister of Mrs. Tweedale. The starting-point of this haunting had been a situation which would form a grim theme for a novelist. An elderly farmer, who was a widower with a grown-up son, married a young girl. His son soon learned to love his stepmother, and the love may have been passionately returned. The result was a struggle in which the son was killed by the father. It is not to be wondered at that so horrible an event should leave a great psychic disturbance behind it, and the lodge was found to be a storm-centre of the unknown forces. The phenomena, which seem to have occurred every night, took the form of loud thuds and crashes, especially in a certain room upon the upper floor, which had probably been a bedroom. Footsteps resounded down the stairs, and upon one occasion the whole terrible fight was enacted in the passage, with all the blows and curses of the infuriated men. The tragedy may well have commenced upstairs, the guilty son have fled to the door, and been overtaken by his father in the hall below. The impressions seem to have been entirely auditory, though a clairvoyant would no doubt have seen the scene even as it occurred. This case closely resembles the last, in that the most furious human passions must have been aroused, so that every condition existed for a permanent psychic record. It should be added that in this latter instance four Pomeranian dogs in the house were reduced to abject terror, showing that there was no hallucination upon the part of the human observers.

In discussing reasons for these and similar phenomena we must not make the mistake of supposing that one single explanation can cover all the range of the facts. To do so would be to court disaster, for someone could at once produce a case which could not be so covered. These instances which have been quoted have all sprung from scenes of emotion, and all represent, as I venture to suggest, mere shadow-forms detached from the real personality. There is another class of case, however, which produces much the same result, since haunting forms are seen, but which differs utterly in its nature, in that the forms appear to be the actual materialized spirits of the dead held fast by their thoughts and desires to some spot which they have loved upon earth. Such a bondage would probably seem by no means unpleasant to them, and might only mean that in the interval of such duties as they might find awaiting them in a new life they loved to return to the old happy scene of their earth-memories. Thus, Brother John, in "The Gate of Remembrance," was an entirely good and happy spirit, and no doubt had his duties

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elsewhere, yet his great love for Glastonbury Abbey brought him down whenever the interests of the old ruins demanded it. All accounts of the wandering of dead misers and others round the scene of their earthly ambitions would probably come in a lower and less happy degree under the same head. One excellent and typical example of what I mean was the case of the old Kent Manor House as detailed by Mr. Dale Owen.

THE CASE OF THE OLD KENT MANOR HOUSE.

The narrative concerns Ramhurst Manor House, near Leigh, in Kent, and was compiled in 1857. The house was inhabited by the family of a British general, who were much disturbed by noises at night and other happenings. A clairvoyante young lady, who came as a visitor, was able to give them some information, her experience bearing out the rule already stated, that psychic hearing is easier and more common than psychic sight. She could see where the others could only hear. The ghosts who presented themselves were an elderly couple, dressed as in a bygone age, who actually stood upon the threshold to welcome her. After meeting them several times they spoke to her, and this marks a difference from all the shadow-forms already described, none of which show any sign of individual thought and speech. These old people explained that they had once lived in the Manor House, and that their name on earth was Children. They declared that they had idolized their property, that its improvement was the centre of their thoughts, and that they were now grieved to see that it had passed away to strangers. It was a case where total absorption in an earthly thing, however innocent, had become a fatal bar to spiritual advancement—a danger against



"THAT NIGHT THE HUSBAND AND WIFE KEPT WATCH IN THE CELLAR, WHERE THEY SAW TWO ELDERLY MEN ENGAGED IN A TERRIFIC STRUGGLE."

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which we must all earnestly guard. Their voices as they spoke seemed normal to the young lady, while the point lace upon the beautifully-brocaded dress was imprinted in her memory. The living lady of the house was able soon afterwards to confirm the statement of her clairvoyante friend, for she also saw the female vision with the name, "Dame Children," written above her in letters of phosphoric fire, together with a statement that she was "earthbound." For some time diligent inquiry could not find any trace of a family of this unusual name having ever occupied the house, but finally a very old woman was found who in her youth had met an aged man who said that in his boyhood he had helped in the kennels of the Children family. Mr. Dale Owen was so interested in the case that he personally investigated it and cross-examined all the witnesses. On asking the young lady whether the ghost had said anything else of an evidential nature, she remembered that Richard was given as the name of the man, and that the date 1753 was associated with his death. Following up his researches, Mr. Dale Owen discovered some account of the Manor House, which concluded with the words: "Richard Children, Esqre., resided here and died possessed of it in 1753, aged eighty-three years. He was succeeded in it by . . . George Children, who is the present possessor."

This narrative must carry conviction with it to any reasonable mind, though I must refer the reader to Dale Owen's "Footfalls" for the smaller details which mean so much. It suggests that the whole range of hauntings of this nature spring from undue preoccupation and want of spiritual effort. One such case seems to carry more warning than all the sermons that ever were spoken. At the same time, Providence is not cruel, and, as I have said, the bondage which is formed by earth-thoughts need not really be an unhappy one to those who are held by it.

When separated into the mere shadows or thought-forms on one side, and actual earth-bound spirits on the other, it is not difficult to analyse and understand a large proportion of preternatural happenings. The division is admittedly a temporary hypothesis, but it serves to keep some sort of order in a subject which has until recently been a mad chaos of inexplicable effects without rational cause. Cases will still obtrude themselves, however, which disturb the tidiness of the most well-ordered theories, and I do not know a more baffling one than that which is treated by two English schoolmistresses, and admirably described in their little book called "An Adventure."

AN APPARITION OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

This adventure, shortly told, consisted in the fact that during a visit to Paris they entered the gardens of Versailles in order to see the Grand Trianon, and that while in those gardens they had a most extraordinary experience, which in the case of one of the ladies was repeated with variations upon the occasion of a second visit. They suddenly appeared to be in the gardens as they were a century before, at the time of the French Revolution, and to see, and in some cases actually speak with, gardeners, messengers, and others who were there in the days of Marie Antoinette. So natural was it all, beginning and ending with normal life, that the ladies hardly realized what had happened to them until they began to compare notes, and realized that some of the buildings and garden arrangements which they had seen had not existed within the memory of man. Both ladies carried away a clear remembrance of dignified officials in grey-green coats and small three-cornered hats, of an intensely still landscape, of trees that looked like tapestry, of cloaked, large-hatted figures, of a running messenger who shouted instructions to them, of a long-waisted, full-skirted lady with a pale green fichu, of a jaunty young footman, and other quite definite details—all this at four o'clock of a summer afternoon. A second visit by one lady alone, some four months later, produced similar effects, differing in detail but not in general character from the first.

Such an experience is so very unlike the vast majority of psychic cases that one is inclined to push it aside. If one cannot get a document into a pigeon-hole, one is too ready with a waste-paper basket, and it is this human tendency which has retarded our advance in this new science. Anyone who carefully reads the narrative of these ladies, and notices the points of resemblance and also the very interesting points of divergence in their stories, cannot fail to take them seriously. It was not imagination or suggestion or, so far as one can judge, hallucination. But what it was, and why by some strange psychic refraction this mirage of the past should be thrown down upon the present, is an insoluble problem. It must at least teach us that, however much our tiny brains may endeavour to comprehend and classify these extraordinary phenomena, there still remain so many unknown causes and unexplained conditions that for many a long year to come our best efforts can only be regarded as well-meant approximations to the truth.

Sir A. Conan Doyle's next article is entitled: "An Old Story Re-told."

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DEAR OLD SQUIFFY

ANOTHER ARCHIE STORY.

by P.G. WODEHOUSE

Illustrated by A.Wallis Mills

ARCHIE MOFFAM inserted a fresh cigarette in his long holder and gazed rather wistfully across the table at his friend, Roscoe Sherriff, the Press-agent. They had just finished lunch, and during the meal Sherriff, who, like most men of action, was fond of hearing his own voice and liked exercising it on the subject of himself, had been telling Archie a few anecdotes about his professional past. From these the latter had conceived a picture of Roscoe Sherriff's life as a prismatic thing of energy and adventure—just the sort of life, in fact, which he would have enjoyed leading himself. He wished that he, too, like the Press-agent, could go about the place "slipping things over" and "putting things across."

"The more I see of America," sighed Archie, "the more it amazes me. Absolutely! All you birds seem to have been doing things from the cradle upwards. I wish I could do things!"

"Well, why don't you?"

Archie flicked the ash from his cigarette into the finger-bowl.

"Oh, I don't know, you know," he said. "Somehow, none of our family ever have. I don't know why it is, but whenever a Moffam starts out to do things he infallibly makes a bloomer. There was a Moffam in the Middle Ages who had a sudden spasm of energy and set out to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, dressed as a wandering friar. Rum ideas they had in those days."

"Did he get there?"

"Absolutely not! Just as he was leaving the front door his favourite hound mistook him for a tramp—or a varlet, or a scurvy knave, or whatever they used to call them at that time—and bit him in the fleshy part of the leg."

"Well, at least he started."

"Enough to make a chappie start, what?"

Roscoe Sherriff sipped his coffee thoughtfully. He was an apostle of Energy, and it seemed to him that he could make a convert of Archie and incidentally do himself a bit of good. For several days he had been looking for someone like Archie to help him in a small matter which he had in mind.

"If you're really keen on doing things," he said, "there's something you can do for me right away."

Archie beamed.

"Anything, dear boy, anything! State your case!"

"Would you have any objection to putting up a snake for me?"

"Putting up a snake?"

"Just for a day or two."

"But how do you mean, old soul? Put him up where?"

"Wherever you live. Where do you live? The Cosmopolis, isn't it? Of course! You married old Brewster's daughter. I remember reading about it."

"But, I say, laddie, I don't want to spoil your day and disappoint you and so forth, but my jolly old father-in-law would never let me keep a snake. Why, it's as much as I can do sometimes to make him let *me* stop on in the place."

"He wouldn't know."

"There's not much that goes on in the hotel that he doesn't know," said Archie, doubtfully.

"He mustn't know. The whole point of the thing is that it must be a dead secret."

Archie flicked some more ash into the finger-bowl.

"I don't seem absolutely to have grasped the affair in all its aspects, if you know what I mean," he said. "I mean to say—in the first place—why would it brighten your young existence if I entertained this snake of yours?"

"It's not mine. It belongs to Mme. Brudowska. You've heard of her, of course?"

"Oh, yes. She's some sort of performing snake female in vaudeville or something, isn't she, or something of that species or order?"

"You're near it, but not quite right. She

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is the leading exponent of high-brow tragedy on any stage in the civilized world."

"Absolutely! I remember now. My wife lugged me to see her perform one night. It all comes back to me. She had me wedged in an orchestra-stall before I knew what I was up against, and then it was too late. I remember reading in some journal or other that she had a pet snake, given her by some Russian prince or other, what?"

"That," said Sherriff, "was the impression I intended to convey when I sent the story to the papers. I'm her Press-agent. As a matter of fact, I bought Peter—its name's Peter—myself down on the East Side. I always believe in animals for Press-agent stunts. I've nearly always had good results. But with Her Nibs I'm handicapped. Shackled, so to speak. You might almost say my genius is stifled. Or strangled, if you prefer it."

"Anything you say," agreed Archie, courteously. "But how? Why is your what-d'you-call-it what's-its-named?"

"She keeps me on a leash. She won't let me do anything with a kick in it. If I've suggested one rip-snorting stunt, I've suggested twenty, and every time she turns them down on the ground that that sort of thing is beneath the dignity of an artist in her position. It doesn't give a fellow a chance. So now I've made up my mind to do her good by stealth. I'm going to steal her snake."

"Steal it? Pinch it, as it were?"

"Yes. Big story for the papers, you see. She's grown very much attached to Peter. He's her mascot. I believe she's practically kidded herself into believing that Russian prince story. If I can sneak it away and keep it away for a day or two, she'll do the rest. She'll make such a fuss that the papers will be full of it."

"I see."

"Now, any ordinary woman would work in with me. But not Her Nibs. She would call it cheap and degrading and a lot of other things. It's got to be a genuine steal, and, if I'm caught at it, I lose my job. So that's where you come in."

"But where am I to keep the jolly old reptile?"

"Oh, anywhere. Punch a few holes in a hat-box, and make it up a shake-down inside. It'll be company for you."

"Something in that. My wife's away just now and it's a bit lonely in the evenings."

"You'll never be lonely with Peter around. He's a great scout. Always merry and bright."

"He doesn't bite, I suppose, or sting or what-not?"

"He may what-not occasionally. It depends on the weather. But, outside of that, he's as harmless as a canary."

"Dashed dangerous things, canaries," said Archie, thoughtfully. "They peck at you."

"Don't weaken!" pleaded the Press-agent.

"Oh, all right. I'll take him. By the way, touching the matter of browsing and sluicing. What do I feed him on?"

"Oh, anything. Bread-and-milk or fruit or soft-boiled egg or dog-biscuit or ants'-eggs. You know—anything you have yourself. Well, I'm much obliged for your hospitality. I'll do the same for you another time. Now I must be getting along to see to the practical end of the thing. By the way, Her Nibs lives at the Cosmopolis, too. Very convenient. Well, so long. See you later."

Archie, left alone, began for the first time to have serious doubts. He had allowed himself to be swayed by Mr. Sherriff's magnetic personality, but now that the other had removed himself he began to wonder if he had been entirely wise to lend his sympathy and co-operation to the scheme. He had never had intimate dealings with a snake before, but he had kept silkworms as a child, and there had been the deuce of a lot of fuss and unpleasantness over them. Getting into the salad and what-not. Something seemed to tell him that he was asking for trouble with a loud voice, but he had given his word and he supposed he would have to go through with it.

He lit another cigarette and wandered out into Fifth Avenue. His usually smooth brow was ruffled with care. Despite the eulogies which Sherriff had uttered concerning Peter, he found his doubts increasing. Peter might, as the Press-agent had stated, be a great scout, but was his little Garden of Eden on the fifth floor of the Cosmopolis Hotel likely to be improved by the advent of even the most amiable and winsome of serpents? However——

"Moffam! My dear fellow!"

The voice, speaking suddenly in his ear from behind, roused Archie from his reflections. Indeed, it roused him so effectually that he jumped a clear inch off the ground and bit his tongue. Revolving on his axis, he found himself confronting a middle-aged man with a face like a horse. The man was dressed in something of an old-world style. His clothes had an English cut. He had a drooping grey moustache. He also wore a grey bowler hat flattened at the crown—but who are we to judge him?

"Archie Moffam! I have been trying to find you all the morning."

Archie had placed him now. He had not seen General Mannister for several years—

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not, indeed, since the days when he used to meet him at the home of young Lord Seacliff, his nephew. Archie had been at Eton and Oxford with Seacliff, and had often visited him in the Long Vacation.

"Halloa, General! What ho, what ho! What on earth are you doing over here?"

"Let's get out of this crush, my boy." General Mannister steered Archie into a side-street. "That's better." He cleared his throat once or twice, as if embarrassed. "I've brought Seacliff over," he said, finally.

"Dear old Squiffy here? Oh, I say! Great work!"

General Mannister did not seem to share his enthusiasm. He looked like a horse with a secret sorrow. He coughed three times, like a horse who, in addition to a secret sorrow, had contracted asthma.

"You will find Seacliff changed," he said. "Let me see, how long is it since you and he met?"

Archie reflected.

"I was demobbed just about a year ago. I saw him in Paris about a year before that. The old egg got a bit of shrapnel in his foot or something, didn't he? Anyhow, I remember he was sent home."

"His foot is perfectly well again now. But, unfortunately, the enforced inaction led to disastrous results. You recollect, no doubt, that Seacliff always had a—a tendency—a—a weakness—it was a family failing——"

"Mopping it up, do you mean? Shifting it? Looking on the jolly old stuff when it was red and what-not, what?"

"Exactly."

Archie nodded.

"Dear old Squiffy was always rather a lad for the wassail-bowl. When I met him in Paris, I remember, he was quite tolerably blotto."

"Precisely. And the failing has, I regret to say, grown on him since he returned from the war. My poor sister was extremely worried. In fact, to cut a long story short, I induced him to accompany me to America. I am attached to the British Legation in Washington now, you know."

"Oh, really?"

"I wished Seacliff to come with me to Washington, but he insists on remaining in New York. He stated specifically that the thought of living in Washington gave him the—what was the expression he used?"

"The pip?"

"The pip. Precisely."



"'HERE HE IS,' SAID THE PRESS-AGENT. 'WHERE?' SAID ARCHIE. 'IN THIS BAG. HERE YOU ARE! TAKE HIM!'"

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"But what was the idea of bringing him to America?"

"This admirable Prohibition enactment has rendered America—to my mind—the ideal place for a young man of his views." The General looked at his watch. "It is most fortunate that I happened to run into you, my dear fellow. My train for Washington leaves in another hour, and I have packing to do. I want to leave poor Seacliff in your charge while I am gone."

"Oh, I say! What!"

"You can look after him. I am credibly informed that even now there are places in New York where a determined young man may obtain the—er—stuff, and I should be infinitely obliged—and my poor sister would be infinitely grateful—if you would keep an eye on him." He hailed a taxi-cab. "I am sending Seacliff round to the Cosmopolis to-night. I am sure you will do everything you can. Good-bye, my boy, good-bye."

Archie continued his walk. This, he felt, was beginning to be a bit thick. He smiled a bitter, mirthless smile as he recalled the fact that less than half an hour had elapsed since he had expressed a regret that he did not belong to the ranks of those who do things. Fate since then had certainly supplied him with jobs with a lavish hand. By bed-time he would be an active accomplice to a theft, valet and companion to a snake he had never met, and—as far as he could gather the scope of his duties—a combination of nursemaid and private detective to Dear Old Squiffy.

It was past four o'clock when he returned to the Cosmopolis. Roscoe Sherriff was pacing the lobby of the hotel nervously, carrying a small hand-bag.

"Here you are at last! Good heavens, man, I've been waiting two hours."

"Sorry, old bean. I was musing a bit and lost track of the time."

The Press-agent looked cautiously round. There was nobody within earshot.

"Here he is!" he said.

"Who?"

"Peter."

"Where?" said Archie, staring blankly.

"In this bag. Did you expect to find him strolling arm-in-arm with me round the lobby? Here you are! Take him!"

He was gone. And Archie, holding the bag, made his way to the lift. The bag squirmed gently in his grip.

The only other occupant of the lift was a striking-looking woman of foreign appearance, dressed in a way that made Archie feel that she must be somebody or she couldn't look like that. Her face, too, seemed vaguely familiar. She entered the lift at the second floor where the tea-room is, and she had the contented expression of one who had tea'd to her satisfaction. She got off at the same floor as Archie, and walked swiftly, in a lithe, pantherish way, round the bend in the corridor. Archie followed more slowly. When he reached the door of his room, the passage was empty. He inserted the key in his door, turned it, pushed the door open, and pocketed the key. He was about to enter when the bag again squirmed gently in his grip.

From the days of Pandora, through the epoch of Bluebeard's wife, down to the present time, one of the chief failings of humanity has been the disposition to open things that were better closed. It would have been simple for Archie to have taken another step and put a door between himself and the world, but there came to him the irresistible desire to peep into the bag now—not three seconds later, but now. All the way up in the lift he had been battling with the temptation, and now he succumbed.

The bag was one of those simple bags with a thingummy which you press. Archie pressed it. And, as it opened, out popped the head of Peter. His eyes met Archie's. Over his head there seemed to be an invisible mark of interrogation. His gaze was curious, but kindly. He appeared to be saying to himself, "Have I found a friend?"

Serpents, or Snakes, says the Encyclopædia, are reptiles of the saurian class Ophidia, characterized by an elongated, cylindrical, limbless, scaly form, and distinguished from lizards by the fact that the halves (*rami*) of the lower jaw are not solidly united at the chin, but movably connected by an elastic ligament. The vertebræ are very numerous, gastrocentrous, and procœlos. And, of course, when they put it like that, you can see at once that a man might spend hours with combined entertainment and profit just looking at a snake.

Archie would no doubt have done this: but long before he had time really to inspect the halves (*rami*) of his new friend's lower jaw and to admire its elastic fittings, and long before the gastrocentrous and procœlos character of the other's vertebræ had made any real impression on him, a piercing scream almost at his elbow startled him out of his scientific reverie. A door opposite had opened, and the woman of the elevator was standing staring at him with an expression of horror and fury that went through him like a knife. It was the expression which, more than anything else, had made Mme. Brudowska what she was professionally. Combined with a deep voice and a sinuous walk, it enabled her to draw down a matter of a thousand dollars per week.

Indeed, though the fact gave him little pleasure, Archie, as a matter of fact, was at

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this moment getting about—including war-tax—two dollars and seventy-five cents' worth of the great emotional star for nothing. For, having treated him gratis to the look of horror and fury, she now moved towards him with the sinuous walk and spoke in the tone which she seldom permitted herself to use before the curtain of act two, unless there was a whale of a situation that called for it in act one.

"Thief!"





"AS HE OPENED THE BAG, OUT POPPED THE HEAD OF PETER, THE SNAKE. MME. BRUDOWSKA WAS STARING WITH AN EXPRESSION OF HORROR AND FURY THAT WENT THROUGH HIM LIKE A KNIFE."

It was the way she said it.

Archie staggered backwards through the open door of his room, kicked it to with a flying foot, and sat down on the bed. Peter, the snake, who had fallen on the floor with a squashy sound, looked surprised and pained for a moment, and then, being a philosopher at heart, cheered up and began hunting for flies under the bureau.

Peril sharpens the intellect. Archie's mind as a rule worked in rather a languid and restful sort of way, but now it got going with

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a rush and a whir. He glared round the room. He had never seen a room so devoid of satisfactory cover. And then there came to him a scheme, a ruse. It offered a chance of escape. It was, indeed, a bit of all right.

Peter, the snake, loafing contentedly about the carpet, found himself seized by what the Encyclopædia calls the " distensible gullet " and looked up reproachfully. The next moment he was in his bag again : and Archie, bounding silently into the bathroom, was tearing the cord off his dressing-gown.

There came a banging at the door. A voice spoke sternly. A masculine voice this time.

" Say ! Open this door ! "

Archie rapidly attached the dressing-gown cord to the handle of the bag, leaped to the window, opened it, tied the cord to a projecting piece of iron on the sill, lowered Peter and the bag into the depths, and closed the window again. The whole affair took but a few seconds. Generals have received the thanks of their nations for displaying less resource on the field of battle.

He opened the door. Outside stood the bereaved woman, and beside her a bullet-headed gentleman with a bowler hat on the back of his head, in whom Archie recognized the hotel detective.

The hotel detective also recognized Archie, and the stern cast of his features relaxed. He even smiled a rusty but propitiatory smile. He imagined — erroneously — that Archie, being the son-in-law of the owner of the hotel, had a pull with that gentleman : and he resolved to proceed warily lest he jeopardize his job.

" Why, Mr. Moffam ! " he said, apologetically. " I didn't know it was you I was disturbing."

" Always glad to have a chat," said Archie, cordially. " What seems to be the trouble?"

" My snake ! " cried the queen of tragedy. " Where is my snake ?"

Archie looked at the detective. The detective looked at Archie.

" This lady," said the detective, with a dry little cough, " thinks her snake is in your room, Mr. Moffam."

" Snake ? "

" Snake's what the lady said."

" My snake ! My Peter ! " Mme. Brudowska's voice shook with emotion. " He is here, here in this room."

Archie shook his head.

" No snakes here ! Absolutely not ! I remember noticing when I came in."

" The snake is here, here in this room. This man had it in a bag ! I saw him ! He is a thief ! "

" Easy, ma'am ! " protested the detective. " Go easy ! This gentleman is the boss's son-in-law."

" I care not who he is ! He has my snake ! Here, here in this room ! "

" Mr. Moffam wouldn't go round stealing snakes."

" Rather not," said Archie. " Never stole a snake in my life. None of the Moffams have ever gone about stealing snakes. Regular family tradition ! Though I once had an uncle who kept goldfish."

" He is here ! Here ! My Peter ! "

Archie looked at the detective. The detective looked at Archie. " We must humour her ! " their glances said.

" Of course," said Archie, " if you'd like to search the room, what ? What I mean to say is, this is Liberty Hall. Everybody welcome ! Bring the kiddies ! "

" I will search the room ! " said Mme. Brudowska.

The detective glanced apologetically at Archie.

" Don't blame me for this, Mr. Moffam," he urged.

" Rather not ! Only too glad you've dropped in ! "

He took up an easy attitude against the window, and watched the empress of the emotional drama explore. Presently she desisted, baffled. For an instant she paused, as though about to speak, then swept from the room. A moment later a door banged across the passage.

" How do they get that way ? " queried the detective.

" The female of the species is more deadly than the male," said Archie.

" It's the hot weather," said the detective, judicially. " Well, g'bye, Mr. Moffam. Sorry to have butted in."

The door closed. Archie waited a few moments, then went to the window and hauled in the slack. Presently the bag appeared over the edge of the window-sill.

" Good God ! " said Archie.

In the rush and swirl of recent events he must have omitted to see that the clasp that fastened the bag was properly closed : for the bag, as it jumped on to the window-sill, gaped at him like a yawning face. And inside it there was nothing.

Archie leaned as far out of the window as he could manage without committing suicide. Far below him, the traffic took its usual course and the pedestrians moved to and fro upon the pavements. There was no crowding, no excitement. Yet only a few moments before a long green snake with three hundred ribs, a distensible gullet, and gastrocentrous vertebræ must have descended on that street like the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. And nobody seemed even interested. Not for the first time since he had arrived in America, Archie marvelled at the cynical

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detachment of the New Yorker, who permits himself to be surprised at nothing.

He shut the window and moved away with a heavy heart. He had not had the pleasure of an extended acquaintanceship with Peter, but he had seen enough of him to realize his sterling qualities. Somewhere beneath Peter's three hundred ribs there had lain a heart of gold, and Archie mourned for his loss.

Archie had a dinner and theatre engagement that night, and it was late when he returned to the hotel. He found his father-in-law prowling restlessly about the lobby. There seemed to be something on Mr. Brewster's mind. He came up to Archie with a brooding frown on his square face.

"Who's this man Seacliff?" he demanded, without preamble. "I hear he's a friend of yours."

"Oh, you've met him, what?" said Archie. "Had a nice little chat together, yes? Talked of this and that, no?"

"We have not said a word to each other."

"Really? Oh, well, dear old Squiffy is one of those strong, silent fellers, you know. You mustn't mind if he's a bit dumb. He never says much, but it's whispered round the clubs that he thinks a lot. It was rumoured in the Spring of nineteen-thirteen that Squiffy was on the point of making a bright remark, but it never came to anything."

Mr. Brewster struggled with his feelings.

"Who *is* he? You seem to know him."

"Oh, yes. Great pal of mine, Squiffy. We went through Eton, Oxford, and the Bankruptcy Court together. And here's a rummy coincidence. When they examined *me*, I had no assets. And, when they examined Squiffy, *he* had no assets! Rather extraordinary, what?"

Mr. Brewster seemed to be in no mood for discussing coincidences.

"I might have known he was a friend of yours!" he said, bitterly. "Well, if you want to see him, you'll have to do it outside my hotel."

"Why, I thought he was stopping here."

"He is—to-night. To-morrow he can look for some other hotel to break up."

"Great Scot! Has dear old Squiffy been breaking the place up?"

Mr. Brewster snorted.

"I am informed that this precious friend of yours entered my grill-room at eight o'clock. He must have been completely intoxicated, though the head waiter tells me he noticed nothing at the time."

Archie nodded approvingly.

"Dear old Squiffy was always like that. It's a gift. However woozled he might be, it was impossible to detect it with the naked eye. I've seen the dear old chap many a time whiffled to the eyebrows, and looking as sober as a bishop. Soberer! When did it begin to dawn on the lads in the grill-room that the old egg had been pushing the boat out?"

"The head waiter," said Mr. Brewster, with cold fury, "tells me that he got a hint of the man's condition when he suddenly got up from his table and went the round of the room, pulling off all the table-cloths and breaking everything that was on them. He then threw a number of rolls at the diners, and left. He seems to have gone straight to bed."

"Dashed sensible of him, what? Sound, practical chap, Squiffy. But where on earth did he get the—er—materials?"

"From his room. I made inquiries. He has six large cases in his room."

"Squiffy always was a chap of infinite resource! Well, I'm dashed sorry this should have happened, don't you know."

"If it hadn't been for you, the man would never have come here." Mr. Brewster brooded coldly. "I don't know why it is, but ever since you came to this hotel I've had nothing but trouble."

"Dashed sorry!" said Archie, sympathetically.

"Grrh!" said Mr. Brewster.

Archie made his way meditatively to the lift. The injustice of his father-in-law's attitude pained him. It was absolutely rotten and all that to be blamed for everything that went wrong in the Hotel Cosmopolis.

While this conversation was in progress, Lord Seacliff was enjoying a refreshing sleep in his room on the fourth floor. Two hours passed. The noise of the traffic in the street below faded away. Only the rattle of an occasional belated cab broke the silence. In the hotel all was still. Mr. Brewster had gone to bed. Archie, in his room, smoked meditatively. Peace may have been said to reign.

At half-past two Lord Seacliff awoke. His hours of slumber were always irregular. He sat up in bed and switched the light on. He was a shock-headed young man with a red face and a hot brown eye. He yawned and stretched himself. His head was aching a little. The room seemed to him a trifle close. He got out of bed and threw open the window. Then, returning to bed, he picked up a book and began to read. He was conscious of feeling a little jumpy, and reading generally sent him to sleep.

Much has been written on the subject of bed-books. The general consensus of opinion is that a gentle, slow-moving story makes the best opiate. If this be so, dear old Squiffy's choice of literature had been rather

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injudicious. His book was "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," and the particular story which he selected for perusal was the one entitled "The Speckled Band." He kept a snake, and used to loose it into people's bedrooms as a preliminary to collecting on their insurance. It gave Squiffy pleasant thrills, for he had always had a



"'THIS LADY,' SAID THE DETECTIVE, WITH A DRY LITTLE COUGH, 'THINKS

was not a great reader, but, when he read, he liked something with a bit of zip to it.

Squiffy became absorbed. He had read the story before, but a long time back, and its complications were fresh to him. The tale, it may be remembered, deals with the activities of an ingenious gentleman who particular horror of snakes. As a child, he had shrunk from visiting the serpent house at the Zoo: and, later, when he had come to man's estate and had put off childish things, and settled down in real earnest to his self-appointed mission of drinking up all the alcoholic fluid in England, the distaste

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for Ophidia had lingered. To a dislike for real snakes had been added a maturer shrinking from those which existed only in his imagination. He could still recall his



'HER SNAKE IS IN YOUR ROOM, MR. MOFFAM.'"

emotions on the occasion, scarcely three months before, when he had seen a long, green serpent which a majority of his contemporaries had assured him wasn't there.

Squiffy read on:—

"*Suddenly another sound became audible—a very gentle, soothing sound, like that of a small jet of steam escaping continuously from a kettle.*"

Lord Seacliff looked up from his book with a start. Imagination was beginning to play him tricks. He could have sworn that he had actually heard that identical sound. It had seemed to come from the window. He listened again. No! All was still. He returned to his book and went on reading.

"*It was a singular sight that met our eyes. Beside the table, on a wooden chair, sat Doctor Grimesby Rylott, clad in a long dressing-gown. His chin was cocked upward and his eyes were fixed in a dreadful, rigid stare at the corner of the ceiling. Round his brow he had a peculiar yellow band, with brownish speckles, which seemed to be bound tightly round his head.*

"*I took a step forward. In an instant his strange headgear began to move, and there reared itself from among his hair the squat, diamond-shaped head and puffed neck of a loathsome serpent. . . .*"

"Ugh!" said Squiffy.

He closed the book and put it down. His head was aching worse than ever. He wished now that he had read something else. No fellow could read himself to sleep with this sort of thing. Blighters ought not to write this sort of thing.

His heart gave a bound. There it was again, that hissing sound. And this time he was sure it came from the window.

He looked at the window, and remained staring, frozen. Over the sill, with a graceful, leisurely movement, a green snake was crawling. As it crawled, it raised its head

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and peered from side to side, like a short-sighted man looking for his spectacles. It hesitated a moment on the edge of the sill, then wriggled to the floor and began to cross the room. Squiffy stared on.

It would have pained Peter deeply, for he was a snake of great sensibility, if he had known how much his entrance had disturbed the occupant of the room. He himself had no feeling but gratitude for the man who had opened the window and so enabled him to get in out of the rather nippy night air. Ever since the bag had swung open and shot him out on to the sill of the window below Archie's, he had been waiting patiently for something of the kind to happen. He was a snake who took things as they came, and was prepared to rough it a bit if necessary; but for the last hour or two he had been hoping that somebody would do something practical in the way of getting him in out of the cold. When at home, he had an eiderdown quilt to sleep on, and the stone of the window-sill was a little trying to a snake of regular habits. He crawled thankfully across the floor under Squiffy's bed. There was a pair of trousers there, for his host had undressed when not in a frame of mind to fold his clothes neatly and place them upon a chair. Peter looked the trousers over. They were not an eiderdown quilt, but they would serve. He curled up in them and went to sleep. He had had an exciting day, and was glad to turn in.

After about ten minutes, the tension of Squiffy's attitude relaxed. His heart, which had seemed to suspend its operations, began beating again. Reason re-asserted itself. He peeped cautiously under the bed. He could see nothing.

Squiffy was convinced. He told himself that he had never really believed in Peter as a living thing. It stood to reason that there couldn't really be a snake in his room. The window looked out on emptiness. His room was several stories above the ground, There was a stern, set expression on Squiffy's face as he climbed out of bed. It was the expression of a man who is turning over a new leaf, starting a new life. He looked about the room for some implement which would carry out the deed he had to do, and finally pulled out one of the curtain-rods. Using this as a lever, he broke open the topmost of the six cases which stood in the corner. The soft wood cracked and split. Squiffy drew out a straw-covered bottle. For a moment he stood looking at it, as a man might gaze at a friend on the point of death. Then, with a sudden determination, he went into the bathroom. There was a crash of glass and a gurgling sound.

Half an hour later the telephone in Archie's room rang.

"I say, Archie, old top," said the voice of Squiffy.

"Halloa, old bean! Is that you?"

"I say, could you pop down here for a second? I'm rather upset."

"Absolutely! Which room?"

"Four-forty-one."

"I'll be with you eftsoones or right speedily."

"Thanks, old man."

"What appears to be the difficulty?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, I thought I saw a snake!"

"A snake!"

"I'll tell you all about it when you come down."

Archie found Lord Seacliff seated on his bed. An arresting aroma of mixed drinks pervaded the atmosphere.

"I say! What?" said Archie, inhaling.

"That's all right. I've been pouring my stock away. Just finished the last bottle."

"But why?"

"I told you. I thought I saw a snake!"

"Green?"

Squiffy shivered slightly.

"Frightfully green!"

Archie hesitated. He perceived that there are moments when silence is the best policy. He had been worrying himself over the unfortunate case of his friend, and now that Fate seemed to have provided a solution, it would be rash to interfere merely to ease the old bean's mind. If Squiffy was going to reform because he thought he had seen an imaginary snake, better not to let him know that the snake was a real one.

"Dashed serious!" he said.

"Bally dashed serious!" agreed Squiffy. "I'm going to cut it out!"

"Great scheme!"

"You don't think," asked Squiffy, with a touch of hopefulness, "that it could have been a real snake?"

"Never heard of the management supplying them."

"I thought it went under the bed."

"Well, take a look."

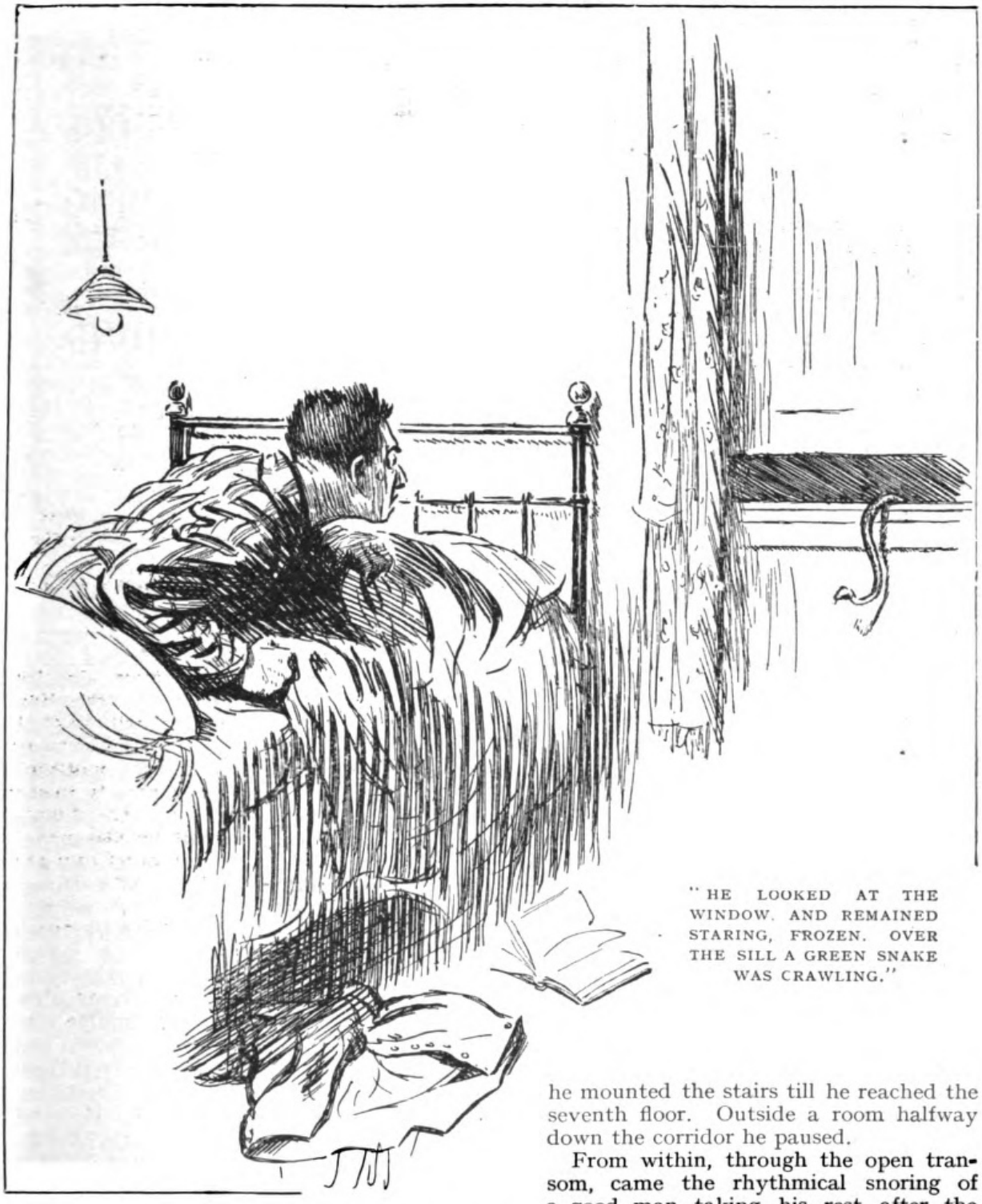
Squiffy shuddered.

"Not me! I say, old top, you know, I simply can't sleep in this room now. I was wondering if you could give me a doss somewhere in yours."

"Rather! I'm in five-forty-one. Just above. Trot along up. Here's the key. I'll tidy up a bit here, and join you in a minute."

Squiffy put on a dressing-gown and disappeared. Archie looked under the bed. From the trousers the head of Peter popped up with its usual expression of amiable

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"HE LOOKED AT THE WINDOW, AND REMAINED STARING, FROZEN. OVER THE SILL A GREEN SNAKE WAS CRAWLING."

inquiry. Archie nodded pleasantly, and sat down on the bed. The problem of his little friend's immediate future wanted thinking over.

He lit a cigarette and remained for a while in thought. Then he rose. An admirable solution had presented itself. He picked Peter up and placed him in the pocket of his dressing-gown. Then, leaving the room, he mounted the stairs till he reached the seventh floor. Outside a room halfway down the corridor he paused.

From within, through the open transom, came the rhythmical snoring of a good man taking his rest after the labours of the day. Mr. Brewster was always a heavy sleeper.

"There's always a way," thought Archie, philosophically, "if a chappie only thinks of it."

His father-in-law's snoring took on a deeper note. Archie extracted Peter from his pocket and dropped him gently through the transom.

Next month: "Doing Father a Bit of Good."

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Purely Personal

IMPRESSIONS OF SOME OF OUR LEADING ACTRESSES

by

E. T. RAYMOND

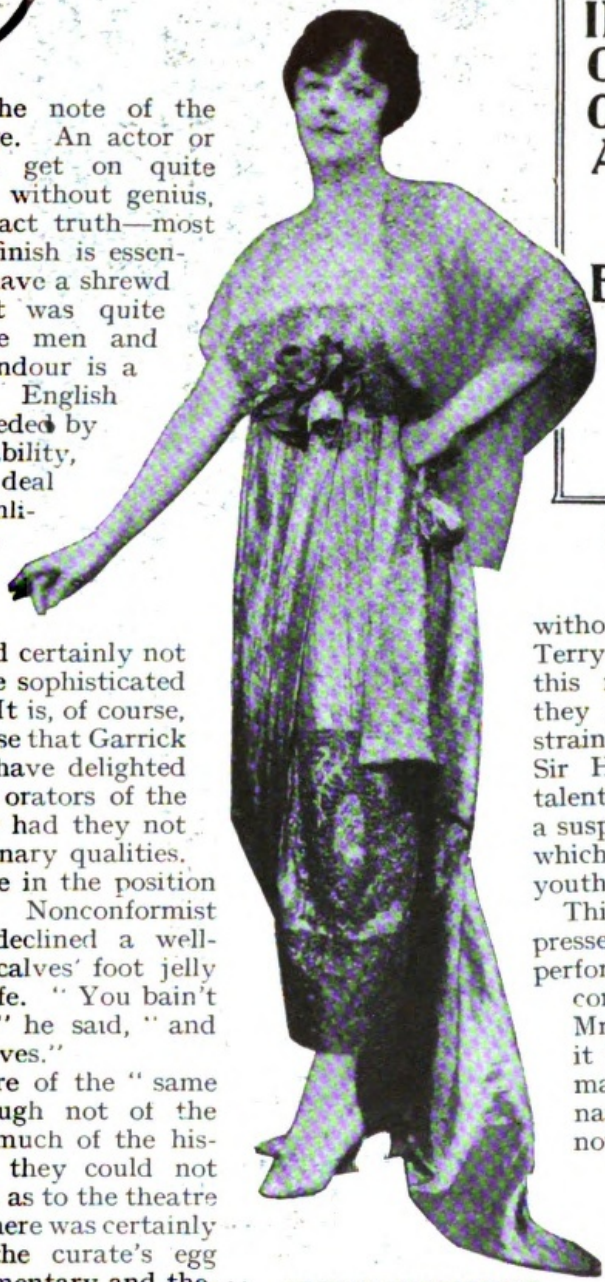
Author of

"UNCENSORED CELEBRITIES"

"ALL & SUNDRY"

ETC

FINISH is the note of the modern stage. An actor or actress can get on quite comfortably without genius, and—to tell the exact truth—most of them do. But finish is essential to success. I have a shrewd impression that it was quite otherwise with the men and women whose splendour is a tradition of the English stage. They succeeded by sheer force of ability, allied with a great deal of incidental slovenliness. The engravings of Bartolozzi and others indicate a crude staginess that would certainly not be tolerated by the sophisticated public of to-day. It is, of course, impossible to suppose that Garrick or Siddons could have delighted the great wits and orators of the eighteenth century had they not possessed extraordinary qualities. Their auditors were in the position of the country Nonconformist pastrycook who declined a well-meant present of calves' foot jelly from the vicar's wife. "You bain't of our persuasion," he said, "and we makes it ourselves."



IRENE VANBRUGH.
Photo. M. Arbuthnot.

Pitt and Fox were of the "same persuasion"; though not of the boards, they had much of the histrionic talent, and they could not have been deceived as to the theatre of their day. But there was certainly a good deal of the curate's egg about both Parliamentary and theatrical performances. The actors, and the statesmen also, resembled the Russian Ambassadors of the period, whom a spiteful commentator speaks of as dropping diamonds and fleas at every stride. They were splendid but slovenly. Theatrical finish in the modern sense is a quite recent development. Even the great Victorians scarcely attained it. There was something about them, as older playgoers will recall, that went with the florid waistcoats, the flowing whiskers, and the creaseless trousers of the time; a want of discipline, a certain grandiose sloppiness, swagger without neatness. Miss Ellen Terry and the Bancrofts were in this respect before their time; they antedated present-day restraint and detailed perfection. Sir Henry Irving, with all his talents, retained to the last just a suspicion of the crudity of style which was every actor's in his youth.

This modern finish was impressed on me the other day at a performance of Mr. A. A. Milne's comedy, "Mr. Pim Passes By." Mr. Dion Boucicault plays in it the part of an old gentleman whose bad memory for names makes all the trouble; not very serious trouble after all. Thirty years ago such a character would have been played in a crudely farcical spirit; it would never have struck an actor to make of it a thing of wondrous art such as Mr. Boucicault has evolved. There would have been grotesque exaggeration, perhaps a little vulgarity; Mr. Pim would have been a mere stage convention, like "First Fool" or "Second Murderer." Mr. Boucicault takes the little old man, with his senility, his absurdity, and his gentlemanliness, and makes him live; a doctor could tell you exactly what weakness of the muscles made him sit down so carefully, and could give you, from that alone, the exact year of his birth. The whole thing is as perfect as one of those little

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blocks of ivory on which the Japanese carve a whole comedy.

On the whole, I should say that the men excel the women in this quality which is the distinction of the modern stage. That is easily enough explicable. An actress may succeed in some measure apart from the perfection of her art—because she has an extraordinarily pretty face, because she can wear frocks especially well, because someone who likes her is in a position to compel the public (through the newspapers) to say they like her. The man who essays to get his living as an actor has, on the other hand, generally to rely on stark efficiency. But there are several actresses who possess finish in the very highest degree. I have mentioned Mr. Dion Boucicault as the first example that occurred to me of male perfection in mere trifles. Mr. Dion Boucicault's wife, known to the public as Miss Irene Vanbrugh, shows power and delicacy in the most perfect equipoise. "Miss Vanbrugh," wrote an enthusiastic critic the other day, "cannot thread her needle without communicating to the audience a thrill of delight." That is a picturesque way of stating the precise fact. Her performances resemble those Dutch pictures in which every millimetre of surface is filled in with significant and gracious detail that, far from distracting, reinforces the main motive. She manages in some mysterious way to give a significance to her tiniest actions. In that play of "Mr. Pim" she sits stitching; and you feel that it is no commonplace fabric, but the very web of her fate, that is in question. A queer thing, that which we call glamour in the novelist; without it some of the finest of human compositions, full of wit, insight, and eloquence, fail to thrill; with it a little schoolmistress like Charlotte Brontë makes one shudder with Jane Eyre over the mysteries of the second floor of Rochester's mansion, and compels one to the end of the story, feeling that life will be tasteless for ever unless the plain young woman in the Quakerish gown gets comfortably settled at one end of the dining-table with her man at the other. To convey that glamour in words is hard enough. To convey it in dumb show (for the dialogue of the average dramatist, hampered as he is by his medium, will not suffice to impart it) is a work of the most consummate art.



FAY COMPTON.
Photo. Rita Martin.



IRIS HOEY.
Photo. Elwin Neame.

I know nobody at present acting whose art in that kind compares with Irene Vanbrugh's. She seldom or never rises to the more stormy outbursts of emotion; she always keeps a good deal in hand; and her quietest moments are often the most effective. For instance, in Mr. Somerset Maugham's "Land of Promise," the "strongest" (and most painful) scene was not that which best brought out the tragedy of ineffective refinement—implying no great intellectual or moral superiority—which is the theme of the play. It was elsewhere that Miss Vanbrugh

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MRS. PATRICK CAMPBELL IN "PYGMALION."

Photo. Burford.

suggested most surely, by trifles of gesture and inflection, the tortures of ladylikeness conquered by the coarseness of circumstance. To see her in the last act, before a word had been spoken, was to realize the spiritual, as aside from the physical, aspect of the outrage; one recognized at once that the victory was not with the strong animal who had mastered her, that there was something, cowed, beaten, submissive, even in one sense admiring, which still remained in silent revolt, and would win. I dare say one might read the play without any real sense of the embarrassment of the savage who crushes the thing which he partly scorns and partly respects, but which he never gives credit for strength, only to find that the intangible is the only reality. But it was impossible to see Miss Vanbrugh without realizing why forgiveness was impossible while the savage remained strong—and a savage.

It is the same with Miss Vanbrugh's comedy parts. She not only creates them in more than the conventional sense; she creates also a world for them to move in, and in that world, like the natural one, broad effects and fine details go together. Many of these details are no more noticed than the actual blades of grass and actual buttercups in a summer meadow; but they are there. Of course, much of this power is the gift of pure genius, but hard work explains a good deal. Miss Vanbrugh has been through the mill. Hers was not the primrose path to success; rather she had to tunnel a road of her own thereto. Daughter of a clergyman, Prebendary Barnes, of Exeter, she came to the stage without influence of any kind, beyond the recommendation of her sister, Miss Violet Vanbrugh, who had gained some small position in Miss Sarah Thorne's touring company. Under the same management Irene Vanbrugh started on the then usual beginner's salary of one pound a week. The company was famous for its melodrama—strong meat for the most part, but of undeniable wholesomeness. To Miss Vanbrugh fell chiefly "character parts," such as the maiden aunt, the comic servant, the rustic maiden, the spiteful chaperone—in a word, oddities, freaks, and frights. She has since spoken of her hard luck as a young girl, vivid in nature, passionately fond of the beautiful, with all a woman's desire to look her best and please by her "niceness," but condemned continually to wear perfectly horrid dresses and represent all that was ludicrous or unlovable in female nature.

At last she got to London; her first performance was in "Alice in Wonderland"; the author, the late Lewis Carroll, was a friend of her father's. Then she came within the orbit of J. L. Toole, now nearing his decline, and her success, on a certain plane, was assured. But it was not until she coaxed—if a more peremptory word is not needed to express the firmness of her representations—Sir Arthur Pinero to write her a part which should be her very own that she made London realize that a new star of very considerable magnitude had arisen. Rose, in "Trelawney of the Wells," was the first of a list of triumphs which lengthens with every season. It has been said of her, and truly, that she gives the impression, in any character, of having lived that character from childhood; you can imagine what sort of little girl was Rose, or Margaret Summers, or the first wife in "The Twelve Pound Look," or Norah in "The Land of Promise," or Sophia in "The Gay Lord Quex"; you can picture them in bobbed curls, or long hair, or pigtails; you can even indulge a fancy of what their fathers and mothers were like. It is this power of suggestion which is the very life and soul of great art; which distinguishes the painter-genius from

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the dexterous master of brush-work, and marks the Dickenses and Thackerays, the Hugos and Balzacs, from the skilful manipulator of incident and dialogue. Irene Vanbrugh is beyond doubt a great artist.

As finished and imaginative in her way, but narrower in her scope, was—unfortunately, we are beginning to speak of her in the past tense—that admirable mistress of comedy, Miss Marie Tempest. Imagination is not generally associated with that class of play which holds the mirror up to the foibles and humours of the life everybody knows. But one had only to see an understudy in a Marie Tempest part to realize the degree of the creative effort she put forth in everything she attempted. Born Marie Susan Etherington, she was carefully trained for musical comedy; delightful in that, she developed her full genius on the "legitimate" stage. In Becky Sharp she had precisely the character round which her marvellous vivacity could most effectively play; there never was such a Becky; one doubts whether the original herself was quite as good. Unfortunately, Miss Tempest has not always been so happy; many of her plays have hardly been worthy of her. It seemed almost a profanation to employ talents so rare and gracious on so wooden a trifle, for example, as "The Marriage of Kitty." Her appearance a few years back in Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's "Mary Goes First," suggested what might have been if the playwright at his best—the best of "The Liars"—had been at her service.

Miss Tempest made herself more than an actress; she has become a tradition of comedy, and will leave some very able successors who owe much to her art, which, highly individual as it is, is capable of successful imitation. It is interesting to note how closely Miss Tempest's emergence from musical comedy is paralleled in the case of two younger actresses. Miss Fay Compton, once of the Follies, bids fair to be a great queen of comedy; Miss Iris Hoey is another recruit of the largest promise.

Of quite another class of artist is Mrs. Patrick Campbell, whose appearance in Mr. Shaw's "Pygmalion" reminds one of her creation of the "young woman of the naughty adjective," who was the most-talked-of heroine just before the war. Mrs. Campbell is of mingled English and Italian blood—her father, a merchant named Tanner, married Luigia Romanini—and made her way to the stage *viâ* a Norwood amateur theatrical club. She had only toured the country and played minor parts in Adelphi melodrama when fame came to her in a single night. At this distance from 1893 it is a little difficult to explain, if not to recall, the thrill of "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray." Sir Arthur Pinero's play was no work of genius. It was a clever, workmanlike effort in a new line, by a veteran in stagecraft, who set out to show that Ibsen's game was not beyond a British farce-writer. "If you like this sort of thing, buy at the John Bull store, and support home industries," was the real message of Paula Tanqueray. The public responded. It supported home industries, and for some time people were persuaded that Sir Arthur Pinero was a great serious dramatist. That illusion went the way of many more. But the enormous reputation of the first Paula rested on a more solid basis. Mrs. Patrick Campbell has not perhaps justified all expectations, for, to be quite candid, her range is a little limited. But within it she has shown great power. There are middle-aged men who still remember the emotion they felt when the original Tanqueray woman exclaimed,



GLADYS COOPER.
Photo. Rita Martin.



LILLAH McCARTHY.
Photo. Rita Martin.

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LENA ASHWELL.
Photo. Hoppé.



MADGE TITHERADGE.
Photo. M. Arbuthnot.

And I *did* so want to sleep to-night." Mrs. Campbell's speciality is the morbid. The neurotic woman of vivid temperament has never been so convincingly portrayed—the woman for whom the wholesome sun hardly exists, who sees life as lived in the ghastly glare and dark shadows of the arc-lights of Piccadilly Circus and in the electric blaze of a crowded restaurant.

Highly individual, again, is Miss Lillah McCarthy. Indeed, she is perhaps a little too individual; she cannot sufficiently sink her personality in that of the character. Fortunately it is an eminently pleasing personality: Miss McCarthy is all "niceness" and womanliness. And she speaks beautifully—as regards enunciation, that is; otherwise she is too much inclined to get to a top note of emotionalism—and stay there. The social status of modern actresses is generally higher than it used to be; but Miss McCarthy is, I think, the only daughter of a landowner the higher stage can boast. Her father was a Cheltenham notability, and an authority on the geology of the Cotswolds, and her stage name is her own and his. Her first considerable appearance was with Mr. Wilson Barrett in that odd mixture of broad farce and religiosity, "The Sign of the Cross"—and she has never quite got over the mood of Mercia. Oddly enough for so very serious an actress, she has been in numbers of Shaw plays and done well in them, though her temperament is perhaps better suited to a more conventional kind of piece. Nora in "John Bull's Other Island," Anne Whitfield in "Man and Superman," Gloria in "You Never Can Tell," Jennifer in "The Doctor's Dilemma," Raina in "Arms and the Man," Margaret Knox in "Fanny's First Play," and I forget quite what was the heroine's name in "Androcles and the Lion"—here is a list in one kind; and in every one of them Miss McCarthy was much the same person, doing much the same conscientious, sterling work, distinguished, but just a little short of great. She is an accomplished actress; one would hesitate to call her more. And yet there are moments when she really does seem much more; the effect, perhaps, of a moral earnestness which is no small part of her nature.

Miss Lena Ashwell is perhaps rather more than accomplished, besides being an excellent business woman. In certain parts her power is extraordinary; her Mrs. Dane and Madame X. were both very notable performances. In a different class, but not far off in stature, is Miss Lilian Braithwaite; she is the complete actress, and somehow you sometimes wish you could forget it; but then you reflect on your ingratitude as you remember all the genuine pleasure she has given you. Miss Braithwaite, like the Vanbrugh sisters, is a daughter of the vicarage.

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CATHLEEN NESBITT.
Photo. Poulsham & Banfield.

MARIE LÖHR.
Photo. Poulsham & Banfield.

There was a time when Miss Gladys Cooper not only made the hearts of young men beat faster, but raised expectations of very great things artistically. These she has somewhat disappointed. She is very pretty, very captivating, very everything-of-that sort, but there seems lacking the energy or genius to "make good" in the sense some critics hoped when she first burst on a public enraptured by her grace and good looks. A morsel of the same criticism may apply to two actresses born in Australia, who have proceeded on lines which in some ways are curiously parallel. Miss Marie Löhr and Miss Madge Titheradge are both of theatrical stock and Antipodean origin. The one is the daughter of Miss Kate Bishop; the father of the other was Mr. George Sutton Titheradge, well enough known to the English public, but worshipped in Australia as the Irving of the southern world. Both appeared first in London in children's plays; both rose rapidly in their profession; both after great successes betrayed a certain uncertainty of objective. Miss Löhr is excellent when she gets a part that suits her; she is above all the London girl, the Paquin-and-Piccadilly, Ritz-and-Rumpelmayer type, and should avoid like a pestilence parts which call for some of the elemental qualities; unfortunately she sometimes believes herself an actress in the great style, and in that faith liberates a quite disastrous energy.

Miss Titheradge is curiously uneven; she is tempted, perhaps by consciousness of a wide range of capabilities, into dead-end parts; really meant for light comedy, but not unequal to emotional drama, she flits butterfly-like from one thing to another. At moments, as in "A Butterfly on the Wheel" and again in "General Post," one feels that she has found herself beyond the possibility of loss; then the critic who has banked on her has an abrupt sense of being just a little too previous. But one is still young at not much more than thirty; and it is no doubt amusing to try everything.

I will myself end with a risk—a slight one, I verily think—of being too previous. Unless I am much mistaken Miss Cathleen Nesbitt will soon be recognized as the great tragic actress of the time. She has power of a very remarkable kind—perhaps I may be best understood if I say that it is about as different as can be from the kind of power of which Miss McCarthy is capable. She is never Miss Cathleen Nesbitt; she was, on a recent occasion, quite terribly the Duchess of Malfi, and left ordinarily calm and critical people almost physically overcome with the emotions she stirred in them. It is not a common feat. But Miss Nesbitt is assuredly no common actress.

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The Sporting Chance

A FOOTBALL STORY.

by SYDNEY HORLER

Illustrated by CHAS. CROMBIE

"LET'S hope it's a fortune!" laughed Rowena Kerr.

"If it is——?" Harry Standish, still holding the buff envelope, swung round suddenly. His grey eyes challenged her brown ones.

A delicious tremor swept through the girl. Then, because she was a woman, she parried the dangerous thrust.

"You get more outrageous every day, Harry," she said. "Open your telegram—I am simply devoured with curiosity! But whatever it is, I won't let you cry off. You've promised me a stroke on all the long holes—and I'm certain to beat you!"

Standish stood silent for a few minutes while the slip of paper hung unheeded from his right hand.

Then:—

"I'm awfully sorry—but I really *must* cry off!" he said. "I can't help it, honestly—I've got to get into Westhampton at once!"

It is hard to deceive a woman—especially a woman who is taking so much interest in a man as Rowena Kerr was taking in Harry Standish just about that time. She had noticed his hesitancy.

"Can you tell me why?" she asked. Perhaps the hauteur was unconscious. "You know I had really looked forward to the game to-day——"

"That's what makes me feel so rotten about it!" was the remorseful reply of the young man in tweeds. "I would give anything not to have to go, but I'm afraid it's impossible—you see, I promised," he wound up.

"Promised what?"

The tone of hauteur had become a trifle more pronounced. One result of young women, however charmingly self-sufficient, taking an undue interest in personable young men who look so well in their tweeds, is that they are apt to assume a proprietary right over the latter's actions.

"I—well, I promised to play football to-day. Of course I——"

Rowena Kerr did not wait to hear the rest of the confession.

"You promised to play football in Westhampton while you were on a visit to us?"

There was an awed incredulity in the girl's tone. Then the Woman in her triumphed over the Judge.

"You had better tell me the rest," she said. "I should have thought that you would have had enough football at the 'Varsity during term-time. But, of course ——" here the feminine in the speaker retired behind the customary defence—"it is no business of mine!"

Standish, man-like, floundered. Then, again man-like, he commenced to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. That he made a bad case of it must be put down to the time-worn fact that a man, in arguing with a woman, generally puts himself in the wrong.

"I did it on the spur of the moment, you know," he said, with desperation, and forgetting in his agitation the essential facts. "The Football Association—the people who run professional football, you know—sent a side down to Oxford to play the 'Varsity crowd. I happened to know one of the team. He turned out to be the captain of Westhampton City. I told him I was coming down here for a week or so, and he asked me if I would turn out for them. Said he would count it a personal favour. I——"

Again Rowena Kerr cut short the confession. This time her voice bit like an Arctic blast.

"It seems to me, Harry, that there is rather too much 'I' in the conversation. Of course, if you prefer—as you evidently do—to play football with a lot of men who do it for a living, rather than spend the afternoon with me on the links, I have nothing else to say. Except, of course, that I hope you will enjoy yourself!"

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The heels of her golf brogues tapping out a message which Standish could not fail to read, the girl walked away. A crash shortly afterwards told him that she had flung her bag of clubs into a corner, and for the pain the sound gave him, the jumble of driver, brassey, irons, and putter might have been himself.

Five minutes later he was crouched low in the seat of his roadster—driving fast to keep his promise.

Some of the biggest men physically have the meanest souls. It was so with Ralph Burger. Well-dressed, groomed to an inch, he was yet rather too gracious to women and too effusive to men to be popular. Men looked at him out of the corners of their eyes, and did not take the outstretched hand unless they were compelled.

Occasionally, however, even the best actor forgets his lines. When excitement runs high, the tarnish may be seen beneath the veneer.

"I thought you were playing golf, Miss Kerr?"

The girl tossed aside the popular novel which had seemed so ridiculously tame compared with the proceedings of real life, and looked up. At another time she could not have tolerated the "Blond Beast" (while Burger was holding down a safe staff job during the war someone had bestowed the title upon him, and the thing had stuck), but when a woman is in deep waters she sometimes ignores her friends, and cleaves to—the other kind.

"My opponent suddenly discovered a much more important engagement. He left half an hour ago to play football for West-



"THE HEELS OF HER GOLF-BROGUES TAPPING OUT A MESSAGE WHICH STANDISH COULD NOT FAIL TO READ, THE GIRL WALKED AWAY."

hampton City, the professional team. Great honour, isn't it?" She did not know why she said the words, except that she was filled with bitterness.

"H'm!"

Fingering his moustache, Ralph Burger meditated. He might have been thought to be considering whether it really was a great honour for a noted Oxford University forward to play for a professional football team. Actually, his thoughts ran in quite a different channel. Somewhere in that gross frame of his the mean mind was working.

"I say," the "Blond Beast" exclaimed

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suddenly, clapping his hands animatedly, as though a great idea had just come to him. "Let me motor you in to see Standish play—what? Cheer the fellow no end, perhaps. Of course"—his thick lips curling—"there will be a frightfully common crowd; there always is at these wretched professional football matches, but we can steer clear of the rabble. It would be an experience—and I'll promise to take good care of you, Ro—Miss Kerr."

Greatly to his surprise (and perhaps to her own), Rowena Kerr accepted the invitation. If pressed she would probably have said that she couldn't play golf, and was fed up with reading—but, of course, neither of these circumstances furnished the real reason.

It was the last match of a season which had been singularly unfortunate for that great team, Westhampton City. From the beginning of September to now, the end of April, disaster had piled itself upon disaster. There had been an unprecedented number of injuries to players, to begin with; several men with established reputations, for whose transfers the club had paid thousands of pounds, suddenly lost their form in unaccountable fashion once they had donned the City colours, and had to be placed in the Reserves—Gullivers among the Lilliputians. Moreover, the men who had been good enough to play for the First League team had usually had the rankest bad luck—goalkeepers and inside forwards had slipped at critical moments, thus giving away goals at both ends.

Amid the smothered groans of their sorrowing supporters, Westhampton City, the champion team in the country only three seasons before, had sunk lower and lower in the League table, until now they stood in a place of shame—the last position but one. Unless something like a miracle happened in the final match of the season, a crushing dishonour was due to fall upon the once proud Westhampton City: they would be hurled from the First Division of the English League and cast into the outer darkness of the Second Division.

Everything depended on that last match with Hampton Villa. If they won, the City would retain their position in the premier Division, even if the margin of safety was only of the most meagre proportions. But if they lost, or even drew, nothing could save them.

James Bradley, the captain and centre-half of Westhampton City, stood in the dressing-room, explaining the position to Harry Standish.

"We're a tired and disappointed side, Mr. Standish," Bradley was saying. "But there's just a chance—a sporting chance—that with you at inside right to-day we may be able to pull it off. Anyway, the directors and myself are much obliged to you——"

"I fancy I shall be under a deeper obligation to you all my life than you ever will be to me," interrupted Standish, enigmatically. "Now"—briskly—"you can get me a jersey, I suppose?—I have brought all the rest."

"You shall have my best one, Mr. Standish," replied the professional; "and a proud man I shall be that you will wear it!"

"I told you it would be an experience!"

Rowena Kerr allowed the sarcastic comment to pass by her unnoticed. She was too busy to pay any attention to the man whose presence in the next seat she was already beginning to resent.

She found herself in a new world—a world chaotic and deafening. She did not know whether the vivid impressions she was receiving were pleasant or otherwise, but she knew that they were absorbing all her interest.

From her seat in the grand-stand she looked down upon a remarkable spectacle. Below her loomed a huge amphitheatre, in the centre of which was a long stretch of beautifully kept turf, the deep green of which formed an agreeably artistic contrast to the white railings which enclosed it on all sides.

While she watched, a marching army of men continued to pour into the vast space around the playing arena. Rowena Kerr had never been to a professional football match before. She had heard in a vague sort of way what a grip professional sport had upon the masses, but the realization came almost as a shock to her.

At first, her lips had curled. She had come possessed of a deep-rooted prejudice. Her training, her associations, her position in life, had all helped to make her feel contempt when Harry Standish had announced that he was to take part in a professional football match. To her and her kind, Sport was a thing to be played just for the enjoyment which was to be got out of it; that a man of her class should hunt, shoot, play cricket or football for money—for a livelihood—was unthinkable. Sport, to her, in other words, was a thing that should not in any circumstances be tainted by any vulgar association with money. Even if Standish did not receive any remuneration for his services, she felt that he had sullied himself by mixing with those who did.

The scratching of a match made her remember her companion. She stole a look at Ralph Burger's face as the man bent forward to light a cigarette.

In that moment she seemed to read the mind of the "Blond Beast." Perhaps the fact that she was separated by only a few

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bricks and a quantity of timber from the man whose whimsical, boyish smile always caused her heart to flutter in a perfectly ridiculous manner gave her perception which she would not otherwise have had. In any case the working of Burger's small mind was now plainly visible to her.

She sensed why Burger had wanted her to come to the match. Knowing well how prejudiced she would be, he had hoped that what she saw would so disgust her that she would put an end to the deep friendship which existed between Harry Standish and herself. The mocking way in which he had said the words: "I told you it would be an experience!" had shown the trend of the "Blond Beast's" thoughts.

"Enter the gladiators!" said a sneering voice at her elbow, "These fellows get paid as much as ten pounds a week for playing football. I wonder if our friend Standish intends to take it up for a profession?"

Then it was that the indignation which Rowena Kerr had controlled for some time found expression.

"I did not know that Mr. Standish *was* a friend of yours," she said. "But please excuse me—I want to see the game."

"Standish is doubly honoured!" replied Burger, trying unsuccessfully to keep a vicious snarl out of his voice.

The girl turned away, affecting not to hear. The vast ground was ringing with cheers, and she found herself seized with an inexplicable desire to join her small voice to the baying chorus which came from fifty thousand throats as a number of men wearing scarlet jerseys and white knickers trotted on to the field.

Then something caught at her throat; a slim youth who looked irreproachably groomed, even in his football clothes, had trapped with careless ease the football which was kicked to him, and had sent in a hard, rasping practice shot which hit the crossbar with a dull crash.

Incomparably graceful had the young athlete looked as he stood poised for a fleeting second after he had kicked the ball, and Rowena Kerr's lips, unconsciously perhaps, but instinctively, framed the impulsive tribute—"You dear!" The intelligent reader may draw what deduction he (or she) likes from the fact that Rowena Kerr had recognized Harry Standish the moment he had stepped on the field.

That first dazzling practice shot of Standish's had made the huge crowd take heart of grace. On current form the match with Hampton Villa was a foregone conclusion; the visitors would win easily.

As drowning men will clutch at straws, however, so will a football enthusiast make any excuse for optimism. When it was announced (*vid* two men carrying blackboards) that "Harry Standish of Oxford University plays at inside right for the City," the wildest hopes were immediately raised. Those who recognized the name condescendingly informed those who didn't that Standish had been the star forward of the University and the famous Corinthians team that year. Thereupon Hope had been born inside the breasts of the home supporters.

"A sporting chance!" they said, appraising the way their new forward bore himself. The stranger in the team was carrying the hopes of the side in his football boots.

Harry Standish was already aware of this fact—not through any egotism on his part, but because of what Bradley, the captain of Westhampton City, had told him in the dressing-room—and his only hope was that he would prove worthy of the trust. He owed Bradley much. Years before, the present professional footballer had been employed as a boy on his father's estate. Squire Standish one day had been heavily beset by a couple of poachers who had been warned off time after time, and it was young Jim Bradley who had, with savage fury, fought the men off when the Squire was being severely maltreated. The house of Standish had owed a debt to Bradley since that day—and part of it Harry Standish meant to try to pay off that afternoon.

From the kick-off the visitors attacked like ravening wolves. If the City were practically at the bottom of the League table, Hampton Villa were nearly at the top, and a big bag of goals that day might give them what they coveted—the League Championship.

With beautiful precision the forward line swept down the field, each man in his place, and fulfilling his appointed purpose. The ball went from player to player without a single City defender touching it, until, doubling back in his tracks, the outside left swung inwards and flashed a ball that made the crowd blink. As it grazed the crossbar and went out of play, there was not a man who did not know how lucky the home side had been in that first bewildering minute. Six inches lower, and nothing could have prevented the City being a goal down.

So early Standish realized that this was to be by far the hardest game in which he had ever played. What Bradley had told him was transparently plain: in spite of the desperate plight the club was in, the City players were obviously sick and disheartened men. The "last foot" in getting to the ball is everything in football, and the

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home team were rarely there first. They played as though they expected to lose.

Amidst his jaded comrades, Bradley stood out as a giant. Restlessly energetic, always doing two men's work and doing it well, he frequently rallied his men when everything seemed lost. Even when the visitors did what had always seemed inevitable, and scored the first goal ten minutes from the start, the big heart of the City captain made him as indomitable as ever.

For the first twenty minutes Standish had to expend his spirit in impatient longing. During this period the home side were penned continuously in their own half. From being an attacker he had to become a defender, and a strenuous one at that. Whatever he did was lost to view amid the crowd of players that swarmed round the City goal.

It was Bradley and himself who finally raised the siege. Leaping at least three feet in the air, the former flicked his head, and the ball came to the amateur's feet.

Swooping it forward with his left foot, Standish got the ball under control at the same instant as he jumped into his stride.

A murmur that sounded like the deep breathing of some fabled monster echoed round the ground. It was the crowd beginning to cheer. The hopes of the City supporters, which had all but expired, commenced to flicker back to life. That first touch of individualism which the amateur had given had been stamped with the hall-mark of class. Suddenly, many in the crowd remembered reading that Standish was the finest forward Oxford University had turned out for many years.

A flash of scarlet—and Standish was away! Feinting, swerving, he tricked man after man, making straight for goal.

The low murmur had grown now into a continuous volley of frenzied cheers. Would he get through? In trying to answer the question men craned their necks, and nearly lost their balance. Down near the playing pitch, the iron rails creaked with the strain which was being placed upon them.

"*Oh–h!*"

The heart-cry rose wailingly to the heavens. Dreadful dismay depicted on their twitching faces, the crowd had seen the man they were applauding stumble while still travelling at top speed.

"That's the boy!—that's the boy!"

Sunshine had swept the clouds away. With wonderful agility, Standish had leapt up almost on the instant, and, being now hemmed in by foemen, had swung the ball out in a perfect pass to the wing.

In this touch, too, he had proved himself the craftsman. Deception is one of the finer arts of football. While the majority of the opposing players, and perhaps the whole of the spectators, expected him to sweep the ball out to the right, Standish had suddenly pivoted and passed to the outside left. The outside right had a half-back dancing attendance on him; the left winger was unmarked. There is as much need of brains in football as in any other business—more, some harassed team-managers will tell you.

Having ample time, the outside left steadied himself, and the ball, when it came, was perfectly placed.

It hung tantalizingly over the goal mouth, and then dropped.

In that moment of tense anticipation many men turned their heads away, fearful lest they should see this golden chance squandered. Those who strained forward saw the tall form of Bradley, the City centre half-back, spring upwards. A twist of the fair head——

"*Ah—h!*"

The ball had writhed against the crossbar and rebounded back into play. It fell to the toe of a Villa defender, who spurned it away as though it had been a poisonous reptile.

In that desperate *mêlée* it was difficult, however, for a ball to be got clean away. The kick cannoned against a City man and twisted out to the right.

Delirium followed so quickly that very few were fortunate enough to be able to narrate what had actually happened. As the ball emerged from the ruck of players a City man, standing clear, essayed a first-time drive.

The ball sped to its mark with the speed and accuracy of a bullet. There was just a fleeting glimpse of it as it disturbed the net in the far right-hand corner of the goal—and then, while the whole world seemed to go suddenly mad, the Villa goalkeeper was seen to pick the ball out of the back of the net and boot it disgustingly towards the centre of the field, to which the referee was already pointing.

A silence that lasted exactly a second, because the crowd were so amazed, and then, as I have said—delirium!

"*GO–AL!*"

The foreigner who said the British take their pleasures sadly would have developed heart disease if he had been present at the amazing scene which followed. Respectable householders, who paid their rates and disciplined their children, suddenly developed an extraordinary desire to frolic with their neighbours' hats; complete strangers thumped each other's backs, and the harder they were hit the better were they pleased. Hats, sticks, and gloves were flung high into the air, never to be retrieved. For several

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minutes vocal joy greeted the glorious fact that the City had equalized!

The noise went to Standish's head, intoxicating him. The thought that he had been responsible for loosing this amazing volume of sound was bewildering—bewildering, but very encouraging!

Once again Bradley pushed the ball forward to him. His passage was immediately blocked, so he swerved to the right. The winger, divining his purpose, cut inwards, taking the place of the amateur. The manœuvre left Standish with a clear run down the touch-line.

The whole world seemed to be shouting



"THE BALL SPED TO ITS MARK, AND THEN THE WHOLE WORLD SEEMED TO GO SUDDENLY MAD."

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his name as he sped along. He felt like a god.

Then, a mountain must have struck him. Something lifted him clean off his feet, and hurled him out of the field of play. He felt himself thump against something hard; a great noise beat in his ears—he remembered nothing else.

In that moment, a girl who had been watching every kick in the game with intent, if not fascinated, eyes, leaned across her seat in the grand-stand and said excitedly to her companion, whose arm she clutched: "See if he is hurt badly!—go at once, please! Quickly!"

Ralph Burger woke with a start out of the pleasant reverie into which the sight of Harry Standish being hurled against the iron railings guarding the playing pitch had plunged him. That the charge of the Villa left back had been a foul of the worst description increased the "Blond Beast's" sense of gratification.

"Eh? What's that?" he inquired.

"Go and find out if Mr. Standish is badly hurt. Can't you see, man?—they are carrying him off the field!" There were the first faint signs of hysteria in Rowena Kerr's thrilling voice.

Burger shrugged his shoulders. He looked at the girl beneath lowered lids.

"Why should I trouble?" he yawned. "You said just now that the fellow wasn't a friend of mine—by which you meant, of course, that I wasn't a friend of his—so I don't see why I should go fagging about. If Standish willingly plays with cads, he should be prepared to take the consequences!"

"Mr. Burger, if you don't do as I ask you, I will never speak to you again! Moreover, I shall go myself!"

Sullenly the "Blond Beast" rose to his great height, and, almost audibly snarling, stamped heavily away.

The game had been resumed, but Rowena Kerr sat staring at the rushing figures with unseeing eyes. She felt that a great cloud was hanging over her.

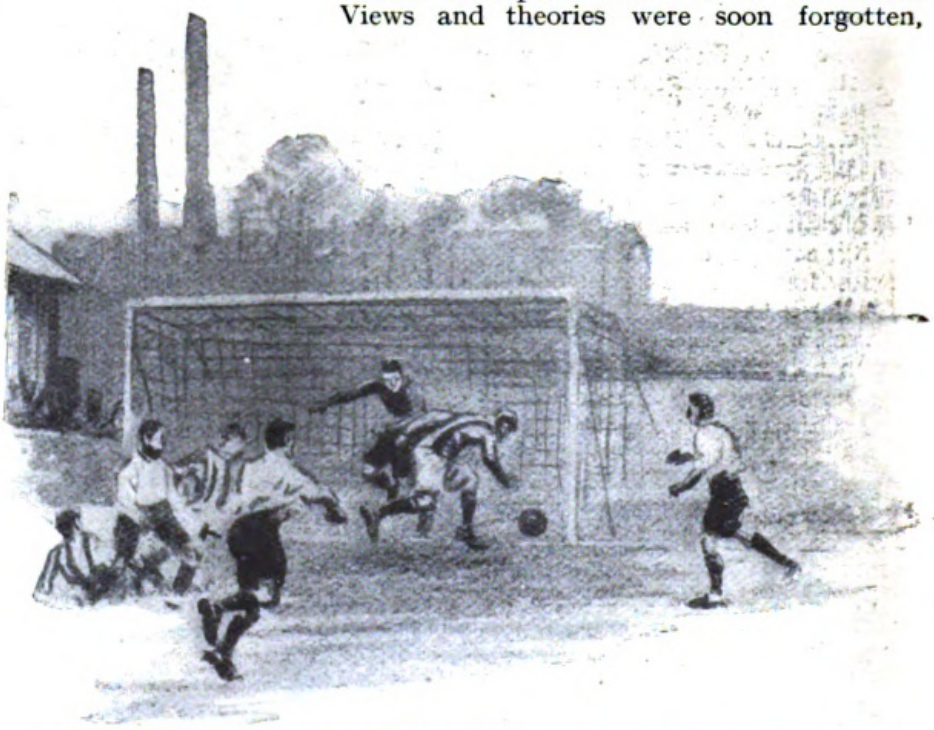
"I wish you good afternoon, Miss Kerr. This is a very unexpected pleasure."

A man, holding his bowler hat, was smiling down at her in respectful greeting.

"Mr. Barclay! Surely *you* are not a football enthusiast!"

"I am afraid I must plead guilty," replied the family solicitor, sinking into the seat which Burger had just vacated. "In fact, I am something worse than a mere enthusiast—I am a director of the City club. It provides me with a much-needed hobby."

"You must tell me all about it one day, Mr. Barclay," said the girl. Rowena Kerr was having her views on professional sport rapidly readjusted. That this sedate, eminently respectable professional man should be a controlling factor in what had always appeared to her to be a degradation of Sport came as a revelation. Views and theories were soon forgotten,



"WITH THE LAST BIT OF STRENGTH HE HAD LEFT HE PUSHED THE BALL INTO THE GOAL."

however, before the anxiety which was swallowing up every other feeling she had.

"If you are a director, you will be able to tell me if Mr. Standish is seriously hurt," she said, unable to control the throb in her tones. "I—I came to see him play. He is a friend—a great friend of mine!"

Mr. Russell Barclay laid a soothing hand on the girl's arm. Behind his thick spectacles the eyes which had seen so much of the world, and knew so well the ways of the humans who inhabit it, twinkled paternally.

"Mr. Standish was not hurt badly—

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"TO ROWENA KERR IT SEEMED THAT THOSE CHEERS WOULD GO ON FOR EVER"

just stunned. He will be out again after the interval.

"I am glad you are a friend of his," the family solicitor went on, "because I'm just longing to tell someone who knows him what a fine chap he is. Many young fellows occupying his position in life would hesitate about playing with professionals, but there is nothing narrow about Standish. He knew that the City were in a perilously bad way; that his playing might make all the difference in this match, and, like a real sportsman, he gave the crowd and the club a sporting chance—and played. Some men, after that bad tumble he had just now, would not have the nerve to turn out again, but he is going to, after the interval—and, you watch, Miss Kerr, the crowd will simply smother him with cheers! I say it with all possible respect, but if I were a young lady, I should esteem it a big thing to be a friend—a very great friend—of Harry Standish."

"He is certainly a very fine player," said Rowena Kerr, softly.

It was even as the director had said, Standish turned out for the second part of the game, and the crowd smothered him with their cheers. In her seat in the grandstand a remarkably attractive girl was seen to clap her hands so vigorously that her white kid gloves split. Her tribute was lost in the babel, but it carried more vital import than all the rest.

Ralph Burger, back from his disagreeable journey of inquiry, gnawed his moustache and looked at Rowena Kerr moodily. Why, the girl was behaving preposterously, clapping her hands like a common person! The change in her was extraordinary!

Yet not so extraordinary as Burger, whose mean mind could only traverse certain distances, supposed. Rowena Kerr had come to the conclusion that she had acted too hastily; that prejudice had blinded her good judgment; and now she was trying to make what amends were possible.

That, at least, was what she told herself. The real reason was that the events of that

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strange but stirring afternoon had served to unlock the secret of her heart—the secret which even she had only been able dimly to guess at before. So far from blaming Harry Standish for playing football for Westhampton City, she now praised him!

For she saw him in an entirely different light; in a supremely attractive *rôle*. He was embodying a sporting chance—and her heart went out to him!

Rowena Kerr came of a family who had always taken the sporting chance, leading forlorn hopes, as Harry Standish was now doing. The family annals were rich in such deeds. Doughty Sir John Kerr had gaily given battle to five Spanish galleons with his one small sloop; Sir Philip, one of the soldier-Kerrs, had ridden at the head of a troop of Scots Greys, and had broken clean through Napoleon's Old Guard; her grandfather had led expedition after expedition into the remote places of the earth, and had scoffed successfully at death—until knocked down by a motor-bus in Piccadilly. She, herself, the memory brought a flush to her cheeks, didn't she always try to drive the big bunker at No. 4 hole on the Hollywood Links?

She leaned forward, her hands clasped outside the wrecked gloves. She did not know why the City club were in a bad way; she only knew that, in their extremity, they had approached Harry Standish, and that he had responded to their call. The thought made her feel proud; the blood flooded to her face as she recalled Russell Barclay's words. It was, indeed, a big thing to be the friend—the very great friend—of such a man!

Thereafter, whenever Standish started one of those bewildering dribbles which never failed to electrify the crowd, the hopes and thoughts of Rowena Kerr went with him. They were with him when, receiving the ball once more from Bradley, Standish sped away in a last desperate attempt to secure the winning goal, and thus fulfil the purpose for which he knew he had been played.

Like the surge of a restless sea, the deep-throated cheers of the crowd beat in his ears. The sound made him call up his physical reserves, the last ounce of energy he had. Espying an opening between two defenders, he shot forward, a mist before his eyes.

The Villa left back scowled as the danger grew near. He saw the restless raider of the City front line beat the other back with a masterly swerve that left the defender powerless, and come on, the ball at his toes.

The back cast a quick, appraising glance at the referee who was labouring on behind, and then hurtled forward. His right leg performed a semicircular movement before he himself crashed to earth with the force of the shock.

Standish reeled blindly. He knew he had been tripped, but he did not wait to appeal; and the referee, quickly appreciating the position, allowed the game to proceed. Harry's mind was on the ball, which had rolled a few feet away from him.

As he raised himself to his hands and knees, he saw the Villa goalkeeper come rushing out of his charge. The sight spurred him to a desperate rally. With a galvanic action he sprang forward.

Whilst still in a crouching position he swept the ball away with his left foot from the outstretched hands of the goalkeeper, unsteadily raised himself, lurched forward, and with the last bit of strength he had left, pushed the ball into the yawning goal with a foot that seemed made of lead. The storm of frenzied cheering burst over his prostrate body as he fell to the ground in sheer exhaustion.

To Rowena Kerr, standing with parted lips and glowing eyes, it seemed that those cheers would go on for ever, echoing down into Eternity. Even after the referee had signalled the end of the game, the exulting cries went volleying round the ground.

As the hero of the match walked slowly towards the dressing-room, the strong arm of the City captain supporting him, the girl jumped impulsively to her feet once more, and waved a dainty lace handkerchief as though she were greeting an argosy coming into harbour, laden with her dreams.

Freely had she given of her pride. She thought it was due from her, and she had not haggled.

The two were sitting in a corner of the library after dinner. Standish had not expected to eat that meal at Wrencrest, but when he had climbed into his roadster after collecting his traps, she had barred the way, her hands held out entreatingly. That moment Heaven dawned for Harry Standish.

A log on the hearth crackled, and then broke in two.

Leaning forward, Rowena Kerr put forth a slippered foot to push one of the burning fragments into place.

A hot wave passed through Standish. The next second he found himself on his knees, groping for the girl's hands.

He caught them and pressed them to his lips.

"Have I any chance, dear?" he pleaded, his voice husky with desire.

"A sporting chance!" gently scoffed the lips of the girl, but her eyes—the beautiful mirrors of a beautiful soul—told him to have no fear.

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The MAN WHO CAUGHT MICE

BY

Gerald Villiers Stuart

ILLUSTRATED BY KAY EDMUNDS



IT was the luncheon hour in the Three Profiteers Grill-room near the Strand; an aroma not unlike the Café de Paris pervaded the room; except that the walls were also of restaurant white, the resemblance ended there. The large grill-room is divided from a smaller room by round white marble columns on a stone pedestal. At a small table so placed behind the pedestal that he could survey the occupants of the tables in the larger room sat a man with blurred but cunning eyes. His hair, which was sandy red, had a sulky, recaptured appearance, as though it had desired to leave him, had left him, and been restored. It was parted in the middle. His large, untidy moustache was thin beneath his nose but bushed out at the corners into whiskery appendages; it was ginger-red. His hands touched it occasionally as a cat paws its whiskers. His face was big and blurred in outline, his body was large and strong; it was dressed in a heavily-braided velvet coat which was too tight, and undulated under his movements. He vaguely suggested a badly-designed ginger-coloured cat without precisely resembling the animal.

When the waiter brought the meat course to the Ginger Man, he took from his pocket a Treasury note and six cards. "You see that note?" he said to the waiter, in a purring voice.

"Oui, monsieur," replied the waiter, in a German accent.

"And those cards?" The waiter nodded.

"You see those six tables against the wall?" He pointed to a part of the restaurant of which he had an unobstructed view. "At one a man sits by himself, at another two men, the other four are occupied each by a man and a woman. You will lay one of these cards on each table, saying as you do so, 'From a friend.' Then you can return and get this Treasury note for your trouble."

The waiter looked anxiously about, noted that the *maître d'hôtel* was making himself obsequious to three men over-eating themselves at a specially-served table—they financed the restaurant—took up the cards, eyed the Treasury note, and hurried away to earn it. His errand was performed deftly and without ostentation. When he returned to the Treasury note its owner's gaze was so concentrated on the six tables, his attitude was so crouching and absorbed, that the waiter pocketed the Treasury note without disturbing him.

At the first table the man and the girl had been too absorbed in one another even to notice the card which the Ginger Gentleman had sent to them.

At the second table the man was holding the woman's hand under cover of the tablecloth. When he read the card he dropped her hand like a too-hot plate and looked anxiously about him. On the card was written: "BE CAREFUL, YOU ARE OBSERVED."

He showed the card to his companion, with a nervous laugh.

"Well, what if we are?" was her calm reply.

"Nothing, really, now you come to mention it. Habit, I suppose. Well, cheerio!" He raised his wineglass and she did the same.

At the third table, occupied by two provincials, the man, who had been looking bored, suddenly looked amused when he read the card. "Is this for you or me, Matilda?" he asked, in a North-country accent. "I suppose the management do this sort of thing to make you think London's different to Manchester."

"I call it rather clever of them," replied his wife. "It's like being in a spy play."

At the fourth table the man said to the

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woman: "Very kind of someone, but the more evidence your husband gets the sooner you'll be free."

The woman nodded assent. "How this would have worried me a year ago!"

At the fifth table the man who had picked up the card said in a hoarse whisper to the other man: "I seen you slip those peas to your mouth on a knife, Bill, and not the only one it seems. Likely enough the proprietor sent this. Wot's the good of going to a toff eating-'ouse to spend our tin, feeding with the aristocracy and eating like the lower middle clawses? Take that card to 'eart, Bill—'BE CAREFUL, YOU ARE OBSERVED.' Take it to 'eart. Peas is fork food; the book says so."

At the sixth table a small, dark, nervous-looking young man lunched alone. He appeared well bred and was dressed in a perfectly-cut tweed suit of a neat reddish-brown pattern. His collar and tie looked like Jermyn Street. He was the last of the six to pick up his card; he looked at it apprehensively and bit his finger-nails, then he put down his cutlery and beat a tattoo on his upper lip with two fingers, to stop it trembling.

The crouching Ginger Man on the other side of the pedestal had watched the fate of the cards with eager, blinking eyes. When nothing much had happened as one by one they were picked up or left on the table he had looked crestfallen and gone limp, but something in the attitude of the man at the sixth table seemed to revive the tenseness of his attitude.

Next time the little man's hand stalked the card it held it trembling for a moment before his eyes; he read, "BE CAREFUL, YOU ARE OBSERVED." His head moved spasmodically on his neck, once from left to right, then from right to left, returned to a central position, then moved very slowly around it like the snout of a big gun wavering towards its target. The little man was trying to look at the other occupants of the restaurant over the top of his eyes. He dropped the card on the table, then he passed his hand across his forehead, held it there a moment and looked hopefully at the table, saw the card again, and jumped to his feet as if he had been prodded with a bayonet. The waiter thought it was a signal, and came to the table. The young man had resumed his seat. The Ginger Man had stiffened and was slightly shivering. "Is—is there anything on the table, waiter—anything unusual?" The young man's voice was shaky and out of control.



"THE LITTLE MAN HELD THE CARD BEFORE HIS EYES; HE READ, 'BE CAREFUL, YOU ARE OBSERVED.'"

"Dere is a larrrge carte," replied an imperturbable foreign accent.

"That's no proof! that's no proof!" muttered the young man. "My bill! Quick, waiter! my bill!" He rose to his feet again, and as he did so his eyes met the eyes of the Ginger Man. He sat down suddenly, as though his knees had failed him. "Yes, waiter, my bill and a cognac. Yes, bring me a large one—with the bill." His fingers were again beating a tattoo against his lips.

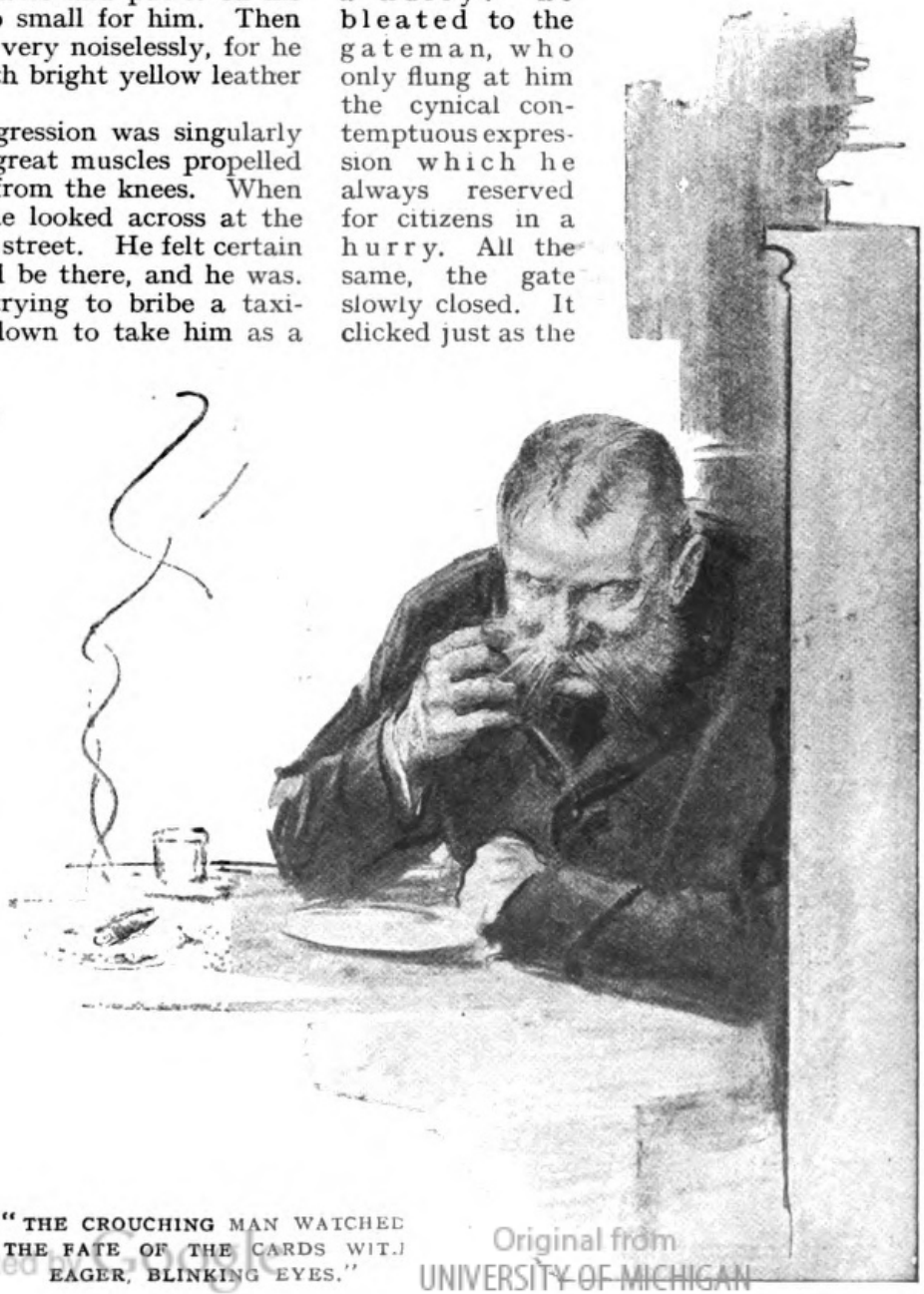
He produced a thick roll of notes when the bill was brought to him, and paid it hurriedly, cramming the notes back into his pockets in loose fluttering

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handfuls. Then he drank the cognac and got himself out of the restaurant with quick, nervous little steps, moving from the hips. When he emerged from the cloak-room with his hat and stick he was near the steps which led up into the open air, and quite close to him was the table at which sat the Ginger Man. Just as the youth from the sixth table put his foot on the first step the head of the Ginger Man turned on its neck like a toy cat's, and a pair of bloodshot eyes looked into the young man's with an expression of malicious triumph; the great lungs filled with air as the brute turned his head. The other man's nerves were in such a state that he could hear the sound. He bolted up the steps like a rabbit which has met a stoat in his burrow. The Ginger Man took a bowler hat from under the table and put it on his head. It was far too small for him. Then he went up the steps very noiselessly, for he wore tennis shoes, with bright yellow leather uppers.

The big man's progression was singularly effortless, as though great muscles propelled him. He undulated from the knees. When he reached the top he looked across at the opposite corner of the street. He felt certain that his quarry would be there, and he was. Poor devil, he was trying to bribe a taxi-driver with his flag down to take him as a fare. Eventually he prevailed on the driver to let him sit in the taxi, but he had hardly sank panting against the cushions when he saw the face of the Ginger Man pressed malevolently against the glass of the door on the street side. He gave vent to a low moan of terror, jumped on to the pavement, and bolted for Covent Garden Market. Behind him, at a carefully-kept distance of twenty-five yards, padded the unhurried form of the Ginger Man.

Through Covent Garden Market, scurrying over the slippery *débris* which was being swept up after the day's trading, scurried the bundle of nerves in the neat tweed suit. He had darted through an office and made a turn to the right; when he emerged into James Street and looked back his pursuer was not in evidence. He was now making for Covent Garden Tube station, because it was the nearest hole in the ground. A great dray drawn across the street blocked his rush for a moment, and when he looked back there was the man who shadowed him asking the price of onions at a stall across the way. The sight spurred him to such speed that he reached the station, bought a ticket for Piccadilly Circus, and rushed into a lift far ahead of his shadow. He danced in agony on the floor of the lift. "I'm in such a hurry; I'm in such a hurry!" he bleated to the gateman, who only flung at him the cynical contemptuous expression which he always reserved for citizens in a hurry. All the same, the gate slowly closed. It clicked just as the



"THE CROUCHING MAN WATCHED THE FATE OF THE CARDS WITH EAGER, BLINKING EYES."

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little man heard the padding of the tennis shoes. He saw the implacable face grinning at him through the lattice, but the gateman was implacable also, and the lift sank downwards into the earth, leaving the Ginger Man on the surface. All the same, the little man looked over his shoulder as he scurried down the tunnel to the trains. An East-bound train was departing with clanging gates as he reached the parting of the way, so he debouched on the West-bound platform. It was empty. In a moment a train would come, he would board it, he would be free!

Then letters of fire, half-way down the platform, burnt these words into his brain :—

" NEXT TRAIN PASSES THIS STATION."

There was a roaring sound in the distance and a fiery centipede dragon rushed past him, scuttling into its cavern, and with it went all his hopes, for the Ginger Man was standing on the platform smiling horribly to himself as he brushed at his untidy moustache with the tips of his fingers.

Thinking himself unobserved, the hunted creature slipped through an opening in the wall which led to the East-bound platform. A train was approaching. Hope blossomed. Hope died, for again in letters of flame was writ the legend, " NEXT TRAIN PASSES THIS STATION." Again the fiery dragon scuttled into its lair, and the Ginger Man was standing on the platform smiling horribly to himself as he brushed at his untidy moustache with the tips of his fingers. Propelled by his nerves, the little man rushed up to the big one and said : " I demand to know—how dare you—by what right do you follow me ? " He staggered back against a " Kiss Me Again " revue poster, slapping his hands helplessly against the wall. He was simply impaled on the Ginger Man's baleful glance. It contained an implacable purpose, suppressed ferocity, yet the nose wrinkled into a sort of smile, while a voice which did not seem to belong to him at all said, with Johnsonian pomposity, " Sir, I do not talk to strangers. May I suggest that you emulate my example ? "

Muttering to himself, " He's not real ; he's not real ! " the little man bolted to the West-bound platform. He did not even look back to see whether he was followed ; he took it for granted. He had abandoned all hope.

Even when his pursuer's hulking form was not visible in the carriage he felt no elation. He was right, for as he stepped off the train at Piccadilly Circus he saw the Ginger Man get out of the next carriage. He stepped back again and was abused by the proprietor of a devastated corn, but what was abuse to a man on his way to the horrors of an unknown doom ?

At each station he tried to leave the train, but the awful fear of seeing the Ginger Man on the platform deterred him. Yet when he got out at Hammersmith the brute was not to be seen in the crowd. George Aylemore—that was the little man's name—pattered away to the gate and, driven by the horrible fear which animated him, reached it before the other passengers. Therefore the ticket



" HE STAGGERED BACK AGAINST A REVUE POSTER, IMPALED ON THE GINGER MAN'S BALEFUL GLANCE."

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which he thrust into the collector's hand was closely scrutinized. He tried to explain, but it was too late and he was too incoherent. The inspector who came on the scene saw a chance to earn his salary. George Aylemore refused to give his name and address; the Ginger Man might be lurking and listening. The inspector threatened to give him in charge, and received a look of ineffable gratitude.

"Yes, quick!—for God's sake, quick!" chattered the little man's teeth. "I am being followed. Yes, prison!—safe!—safe! How do I get there?"

"It's all right," purred a voice at his elbow. "I had both tickets—Covent Garden to Hammersmith." The Ginger Man handed the tickets to the inspector and nodded meaningly at his victim. "He belongs to me. I mean, I am in charge of him."

"He's not! He's not!" But the inspector had lost interest and turned away. The Ginger Man seemed to lose interest also, and stood absorbed in the contemplation of a theatrical poster, complacently caressing his whiskery moustache with rotary motions of his paws. The little man stood first on one foot, then on the other, biting his finger-nails irresolutely, until a train described as "Richmond Non-Stop" rushed up to the platform beneath him. He looked at the Ginger Man, then he made a panic rush to the steps leading to the Richmond platform. Hitherto he had only bolted for the nearest cover; the mention of prison had imbued him with a definite plan of eluding the implacable nightmare which brooded over him. He fawned on the gate-keeper who demanded his ticket, he offered him money, but in the end he was obliged to run to the ticket-office with one eye on the Ginger Man, who had apparently lost all interest in him. He might have run out into the street, but the formless fear which had him in its grasp was accentuated when he had only his little legs to pit against those undulating muscles which propelled his tormentor. He bought a ticket for Richmond. About a minute later the red, whiskery moustache of the Ginger Man was tickling the grille; he bought two tickets for Richmond. He took up a position exactly twenty-five yards away from George Aylemore, who was standing on the platform near the try-your-weight machine, and watched him with the same tense gleam in his bloodshot eyes which had been so noticeable in the restaurant, the same stiffened crouching attitude, so far as a standing man can crouch, was also suggested. Like a pointer pointing a partridge.

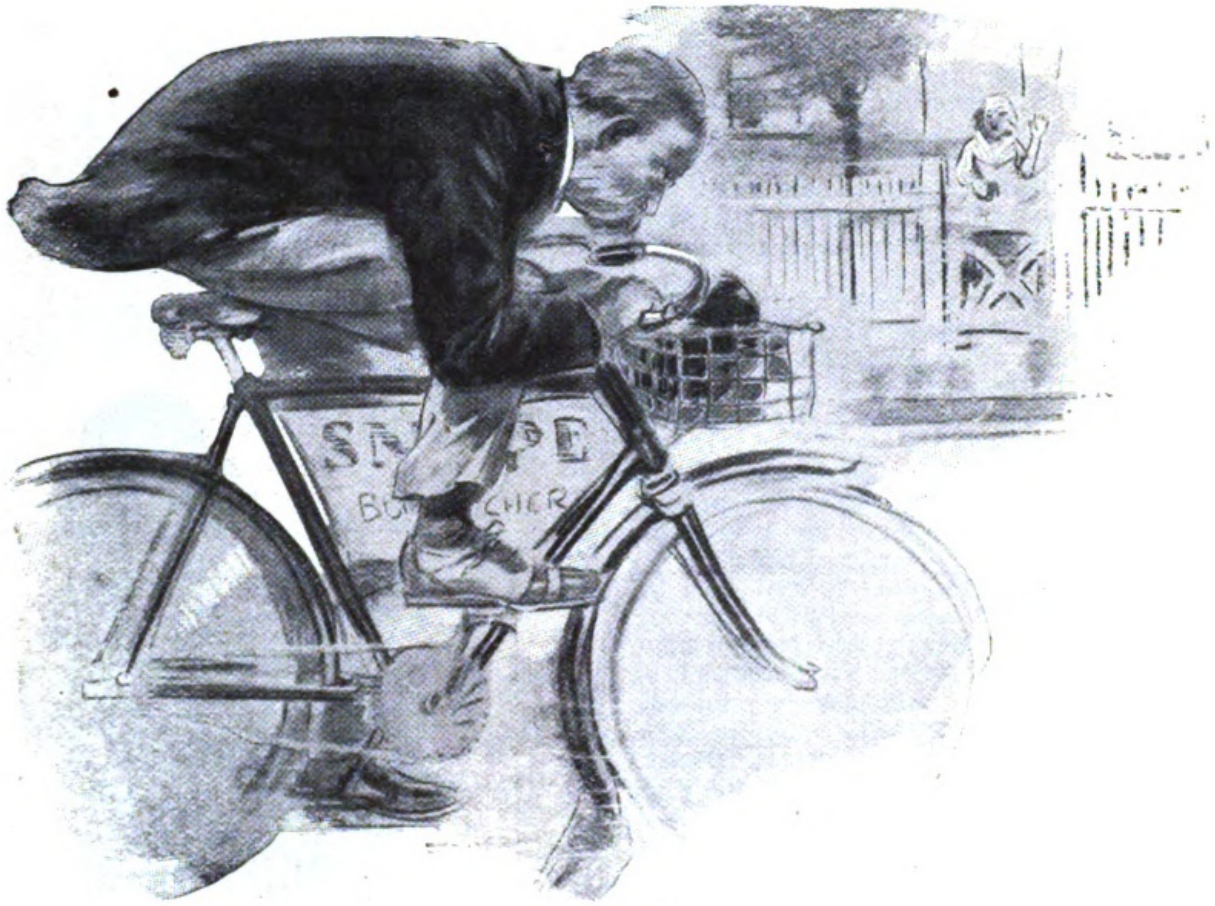
The little man stood first on one leg, then on the other, then he made a nervous rush towards the other man as he had done at Covent Garden station, and said desperately, with jerking features, "Sir! sir! for God's sake what is it you want of me? Is it money?"

Immediately, as though the words had been a cue on the stage, the Ginger Man



"THE GINGER MAN WAS STANDING ON THE PLATFORM, SMILING HORRIBLY TO HIMSELF."

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"HE WAS BREASTING A HILL FOR ALL HE WAS WORTH, WHEN HE HEARD A SMALL BOY

struck an attitude. "The money has not yet been *min-ted* which would swerve Jason Eames from his duty." He looked around proudly, as though waiting for the applause to subside.

"Then what is it? Whatever it is, do it now!" He raised his hands like a pleading mouse. "Do it now; I can't stand this sus——" Then his teeth began to chatter, for he was impaled once more on the destructive baleful glare from the bloodshot eyes and two hands, hitherto folded, shot out towards him into threatening claw-like fingers, retracted, and shot out again.

"No, no!" The Ginger Man's voice was almost as agitated as George Aylemore's. "Keep away from me! Too soon yet; too many people about. You'll last—you'll last—hours yet—hours yet."

"You're not real! You're not real!"

"Perhaps I am, perhaps I'm not." The Ginger Man, with one of his sudden changes of manner, took a penny from his pocket, undulated on to the try-your-weight machine, and put the penny in the slot. "Look!" He himself looked the quintessence of malice as the indicator fled round the dial to the fourteen-stone mark.

"That's no proof—that's no proof!" squeaked the voice.

People in straw hats and boating flannels strolled past. Flappers bought chocolates. The sun shone brightly. The train for Richmond hurried up to the platform.

Outside the station at Richmond there was a policeman. George Aylemore rushed into his arms. "Save me, policeman! I am being followed."

"Now then, young man, none of that!" The policeman eyed him sternly. "Go home quiet. You'll sleep it off and no harm done."

"I am being followed, I tell you! I—I am not drunk."

"Do you want to give anyone in charge?"

"Yes, yes! that's it! I give him in charge, policeman."

"Well! Point him out."

The young man looked wildly around. People were streaming out of the station, but the Ginger Man was not among them.

"As I thought," said the policeman. "You've got 'em proper. Drop it! See a doctor."

"I'm on my way, but I'll never get—he'll

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CRY OUT: 'GO IT, GOOCH! GO IT, SNAPE! SNAPE'S A-GAINING ON YER INCH BY INCH.'"

pounce on me before I get there. He'll pounce——"

"Run along with you!" The policeman walked away. They are very easily bored. The taxis had all been taken. There were, however, numerous sea-going hacks lying at anchor, the captains asleep on the bridge. George Aylemore scurried up to the nearest and thrust ten shillings into the man's hand. "Drive away—quick! quick!—anywhere! I'll tell you later!" The landau hack creaked and lurched away in the direction of the boats. To the casual observer it appeared to be empty, for its occupant burrowed low into the bottom of it. He had not seen the Ginger Man since he had entered the train at Hammersmith, but he could feel the brute trailing him up like a stoat after a rabbit, and the hack crawled. A few hundred yards from the public gardens a motor bus came up from behind. As it passed those on top were privileged to see George Aylemore lying on his back in the bottom of the hack, apparently helpless and alcoholic, until something galvanized him into a spasm of movement and a squeak of terror. They could not know that one of themselves was responsible, for, except that his hat was a size too small, they saw nothing odd about the big man in the artist's velvet coat who smiled slyly and caressed his whiskery moustache with rotary movements of his fingers. Besides, he vanished in a moment with incredible swiftness.

A moment later the terrified occupant of the hack felt the cessation of forward movement.

The driver was always glad of an excuse to breathe the motive power, so he pulled up when the Ginger Man hailed him. "I'm engaged to give this gent 'arf a Bradbury's worth of air," he explained, "and it ain't exhausted. Cawn't oblige you just now."

The Ginger Man thrust a note into the driver's hand. "I shall not be depriving the gentleman of his share of the ozone; in fact, I shall be doubling it; you can drive twice as far."

The driver looked down into the carriage. "Why, he's in no condition to know. Get in, sir." The hack lumbered on.

"How dare you!" squeaked the little man when he could get his voice to work. The crowd in the street, the driver on the box, the sun overhead, the accustomed surroundings, gave him courage, even though

he was sitting by the side of the Ginger brute who ignored his presence until he spoke. "This—this is my private——" The words froze upon his lips. It was not only the implacable animal ferocity of his companion's glare, the realization that those blurred, bloodshot eyes were denuded of all possibilities of human appeal. There was also the feral actions of his hands. They shot out into claws and retracted again and again. While their owner appeared to be reasoning himself into restraint, a snarling animal voice was saying, "Not now—too many people about—he'll last for hours yet—hours yet."

Leaning against the railings of a house there was a bicycle fitted with a light carrier, containing some small parcels. On a sheet of black-enamelled tin was painted in white letters this inscription: "Gooch, Family Grocer."

George Aylemore, spurred by terror, flung himself out of the hack, grabbed the bicycle, mounted it at the third intention, and fled down-hill, past the startled hack-driver. George Aylemore was in a panic, yet he moved towards a definite objective. Somewhere in the world was a city of refuge, could he but reach it. He knew that by rushing towards the open country he was playing into the hands of the Ginger doom, but it had to be; besides, this city of refuge was only six miles away, and the Gooch bicycle was a free mover in spite of the parcels.

He was past the Golf Club, he was breasting a hill for all he was worth, when he heard a small boy cry out: "Go it, Gooch! Go it, Snape! Snape's a-gaining on yer inch by inch." He looked back, his hat flew off, he tried to save it, he capsized. The small boy danced with joy. "Snape has won, by golly!" he yelled. But, to the small boy's surprise, the bulky occupant of the bicycle bearing the inscription "Snape, Family Butcher" and two red-and-white mutton chops in the carrier, got off when he came to within twenty-five yards of his competitor.

He noted that Gooch, the grocer, mounted again in a frenzy and rode away squeaking with terror, leaving many sugar rations lying on the road, while Snape, the butcher, on the other hand, mounted leisurely and followed after. The small boy was about to increase his sugar ration when his eyes met the eyes of the Ginger Man. He dropped the parcel and ran home blubbering. It was not only the dehumanized animal of prey which looked out of the eyes. There was also a strange mewling sound going on inside the man—a barely emitted noise.

Far away on a wooded hill stood a country house with many windows; this was the refuge which George Aylemore hoped to reach if his strength held out. He pedalled furiously, he panted, gasped, and wept as he fought against the longing to give in and get it over. Get what over? That was the spur which pricked him forward. The terror of the unknown. He looked behind him; the Ginger Man had taken off his little black hat and put it in the carrier with the mutton chops. His hair flew out, his whiskery moustache flew up, he was no longer maintaining the twenty-five yards distance; he was perspiring and pursuing now with lethal purpose. He was making horrible noises. The bicycle of Snape, the family butcher, was inferior to the bicycle of Gooch, the family grocer; it also made noises—nice healthy, wholesome, creaky noises. It needed a good oiling; the tyres were badly inflated. The Ginger Man, for all his strength, was decidedly handicapped, but the ferocity of him as he crouched over the handle-bars, his shoulders hunched above his head, was only increased thereby. They were passing through a strip of woodland; there was no one in sight; he was only five yards behind his victim now, but he could not lessen the distance. The mewling noise he emitted so loudly seemed to drive the other bicycle forward—or was it the shrieks of the little man who rode it? At the end of the wood was a lodge gate; it was shut, but the door of the lodge was open. The little man flung himself off the bicycle of Gooch, the grocer, and rushed in, shrieking for help.

The big man flung himself off the bicycle of Snape, the butcher. Through the gate at the end of the well-kept avenue he saw a house with many shining windows. He gave vent to quite a human shriek, a pitiful sound. Then he turned his machine round. It fell over sideways, his hat fell out of the carrier. He righted the machine and tried to mount it and missed the step like a comic bicycle trick-rider on the music-hall stage. His face was distorted with terror. Its aspect would have given George Aylemore much pleasure. At last he mounted the bicycle and rode away as if fiends from hell were on bicycles behind him.

"I have returned," said George Aylemore to Dr. Aspinwall, in the reception-room of the private asylum at the end of the avenue. "Keep me here; for God's sake keep me here! It has all come back on me. I am being followed—followed, I tell you! A great Ginger Cat. Before it was only an Apache from Paris."

The doctor questioned him further. Then he raised the left eyelid.

"My dear man," he said, soothingly, "I assure you that you are cured of your delusions and your drugs. This must be a reality."

The young man clung to Dr. Aspinwall. "Don't turn me out! Keep me here!"

"That'll be all right, my dear fellow. I'll

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come with you. This is most interesting. To-morrow we will repair to that restaurant, and I shall probably be able to prove that it was not a delusion. What did you say that restaurant was called ? "

" I don't remember the name, but I could take you there. I won't go alone. I won't go alone."

It was the luncheon hour in the grill-room of the Three Profiteers, near the Strand. The Ginger Man again occupied the little table between the fruit buffet and the pedestal. He was surveying the six tables of which he had an unobstructed view. His eyes were more bloodshot, more yellow and blurred, but his attitude had gained in intensity as he watched. There were six cards on the table in front of his plate. He was annoyed because the man at the sixth table sat with his back to him. The man was alone. At the next table there were two men, very large and powerful. The young couple who were too much absorbed in one another to pick up cards occupied their table of yesterday. They were again too absorbed when the waiter left a card as he passed, on which was written, " BE CAREFUL, YOU ARE OBSERVED." The man at the sixth table showed signs of nervous distress. The Ginger Man began to crouch ; his shoulders rose higher and higher above his head. In his nervous agitation the man at the sixth table dropped his card on the floor. The two men at the fifth table rose and made for the exit. They wheeled by the cloak-room door. The man at the sixth table got up with an agitated gesture. The nose of the Ginger Man wrinkled into a smile. Then he gave vent to a snarling, terrified sound. The man at the sixth table had turned round and looked into his gruesome eyes. At that moment the two big men pinioned the Ginger Man, who writhed and snarled and spat. He was trundled up the stairs by expert hands and pushed into a windowless motor.

The man at the sixth table went on with his luncheon ; he was joined by George Aylemore and another man.

" You see, my dear fellow," said Dr. Aspinwall to George Aylemore, " that the man was only too real ; no delusion, eh ? There's his card—' BE CAREFUL, YOU ARE OBSERVED.' That's how he bolted his mice from their holes. An old patient of mine. Most interesting case. He had a great success in a detective play ; wrote it himself, took the principal part—Jason Eames, the detective. The trouble was he couldn't stop being a detective. They brought him to me. I cured him. Hypnotic suggestion. Trouble is, they sometimes relapse. Lucky you had the best bicycle yesterday. But you are cured, Aylemore, of your drugged nerves, or I wouldn't have told you all this. Waiter !—the bill ! "

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 81.

(The Third of the Series.)

DESCRIBED in famous verse long time ago,
Whose writer you, perhaps, would wish to know.
Well, there's no doubt he was an Englishman,
Geoffrey by name, though some may call him Dan.

1. Such be your plaint when such the fish you take.
2. Makes wine : if so disposed, can islands make.

3. Naught but a river France discovers here.
4. At Anglo-Bengalee he took the chair.

5. Once found in music, now in crockery's guise.
6. So fond of eggs that e'en a snake's he'd prize.

7. Of ships and roofs and horn perhaps you think.
8. And here maybe you'll hear the dollars chink.

9. Just after one your coat may well be one.
10. 'Tis one, 'tis two. (And now the task is done.)

QUÆSTOR.

Answers to Acrostic No. 81 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, *Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on May 8th.*

To every light one alternative answer may be sent ; it should be written at the side. At the foot of his answer every solver should write his pseudonym and nothing else.

ANSWER TO No. 79.

1.	L	a y	S
2.	O	u	T
3.	N	u m b e	R
4.	D	i a n	A
5.	O	r i o	N
6.	N	i	D

NOTE.—Light 4. " Great is Diana of the Ephesians."

ANSWER TO No. 80.

1.	C	r i	B
2.	H	o	U
3.	E	i g h	T
4.	E	d i	T
5.	S	t o n	E
6.	E	l d e	R

NOTE.—Light 2. Hour, three-fourths of the word.

Osier, oyster, oleander, and the river Otter all provide satisfactory answers for the third light of Acrostic No. 77. All these words are therefore admitted as alike correct.

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A SULTAN TO LAUGH AT

by W-B-HARRIS

Illustrated by E-PRATER

IT was on the quay at Rabat, that picturesque old town on the Atlantic coast of Morocco, that the Sultan Mulai Hafid finally handed to General Lyautey, the French Resident-General in Morocco, the documents of his abdication. It had been a long struggle to get them, for although His Majesty was aware that the only course open to him was to cede the throne and leave the country, still he was desirous, and made no concealment of his desire, to bargain to the very last moment. However, at length the question was settled, and as the Sultan stepped on board the launch to proceed to the French cruiser that was to take him as far as Gibraltar, *en route* to France, the official document of abdication was handed over. In return he received a cheque for forty thousand pounds, the last instalment of the agreed sum of money which the new Protectorate Government of Morocco had undertaken to pay him.

Obstinate to the Last.

The following morning the cruiser, with the Sultan on board, arrived at Gibraltar. The writer of these lines happened to be there, returning from Morocco to England, and was leaving the same day for Plymouth by steamer direct. Desirous, however, of seeing some personal friends who were amongst the Sultan's suite, he proceeded on board the French cruiser to visit them. It was his desire, if possible, to avoid meeting the Sultan, for a few months previously there had been a scene in Fez in which the unchecked torrents of Sultanate wrath had been poured on his head for having given too much publicity to the barbarous atrocities which His Majesty had been committing. So he took every precaution not to be seen by His Majesty, in order to avoid the outpourings of renewed wrath. But in vain. The Sultan caught a glimpse of him as he stepped on board, and, hurrying to meet him, embraced him in the most cordial manner, and then stated that, unless he would consent to join the suite and continue the journey with him to France, he (the Sultan) would claim the right of being in British territorial waters and refuse to proceed an inch farther. The situation was difficult.

A hurried consultation was held. The writer's plans were already fixed; it was no easy matter t change them at the last moment, but the Sultan insisted. The French authorities, too, foreseeing real difficulties, begged him to alter these plans and to proceed to France, to which the writer eventually consented. The Sultan, appeased, offered no more resistance to continuing his journey, and by midday we were *en route* for Marseilles.

What had influenced the Sultan was this. He was suffering from nerves, and once on board the warship had become convinced that he was under arrest and was on his way to imprisonment in France. He was particularly desirous of having, therefore, as members of his suite, one or two persons of British origin, so that there might be witnesses—or even objectors—in the case of his incarceration. Of course, such a thought had never entered the minds of the French Government.

Two days later the Sultan landed in Marseilles, where he was officially received. The quay was hung with flags, there was a cavalry escort, and military music enlivened the scene.

The Sultan and the Conjurer.

At Gibraltar the French cruiser had been abandoned for the greater comforts and more ample space of a P. and O. On board this steamer, *en route* to Australia, was a music-hall troupe, and it was their kind thought to give a performance in honour of the Sultan. The sea was calm, the night warm, and after dinner the performance

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"'THESE PEOPLE,' SAID THE SULTAN, WAVING HIS HAND TOWARDS THE CROWD AT DINNER, 'ARE BADLY DISTRIBUTED. MANY ARE NOT HAPPY. LET US REARRANGE THEM.'"

took place—singing, dancing, and some juggling. One item of the show took place in the saloon, where a very attractive and skilful lady conjurer performed some most astonishing tricks. The Sultan and his suite were much impressed, but their astonishment reached its climax when the charming young lady filled an apparently unlimited number of glasses with an apparently unlimited variety of drinks out of a medium-sized teapot.

As we threaded our way out of the saloon one of the more influential of the native suite whispered in my ear: "What do you think the lady would take for the teapot?" I naturally replied that probably all the wealth of the world could not purchase so unique a vessel. My friend was disappointed; he would clearly have liked to own a teapot, and to have had it always beside him, which would pour out any beverage he commanded. "It would have been," he added, with a sigh, "so useful when one was travelling!"

Although Mulai Hafid was by no means popular in France, his visit received a good deal of attention, and the French public took considerable interest in his personality. He was, in fact, the man of the hour. His portrait appeared in every paper, and all his movements were closely reported and read. His features appeared in many advertisements, and an enterprising firm of makers

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of "braces" hung the hosiery shops with an advertisement of the Sultan wearing a pair of these braces.

His Horror of the Train.

His Majesty, who never minded how dangerously fast he travelled in motor-cars, had a horror of the train, and it had been a little difficult to persuade him to consent to proceed to Vichy by that means. The distance being great, the journey by motor, with his numerous suite of French officers and diplomats and all his native retinue, would have been a difficult one to have organized. So three days after his arrival at Marseilles he entered the suite of carriages that had been specially added to the train that was to convey him to the fashionable health resort. He was unmistakably nervous as the train left, and made no secret of it. As the pace increased, he wanted the train stopped, and said he would *walk* to Vichy rather than continue; but the climax was reached when, with a shrill whistle, the train hurled itself into a long tunnel, and apparently into unending darkness.

The Sultan's fear was pitiful to behold. He literally clung to the French officer beside him, with terror staring from his eyes. All he could utter was, "Tell them to stop! Why don't you tell them to stop?" The fright of his native retainers was even more marked. They called out and clung to each other in abject fear, except the little black slave boys, who seemed intensely amused. Then the train whirled out of the tunnel into daylight again. The Sultan pulled himself together, and said, with an air of offended majesty, "You will kindly tell them not to do it again."

"I am afraid it will be difficult to avoid."

"Why?"

"Because the line must pass under the hills."

"Then the train must stop, and I will walk over the top and join it again on the other side."

"The distance——"

"I do not mind the distance. Anything is better than such suffering as it occasions me."

However, he was persuaded that his proposal was impracticable, and bore the few more tunnels that we passed through with commendable *sang-froid* and courage, though on each occasion His Majesty expressed his very distinct disapproval of railways and their builders, and more especially the folly of making tunnels.

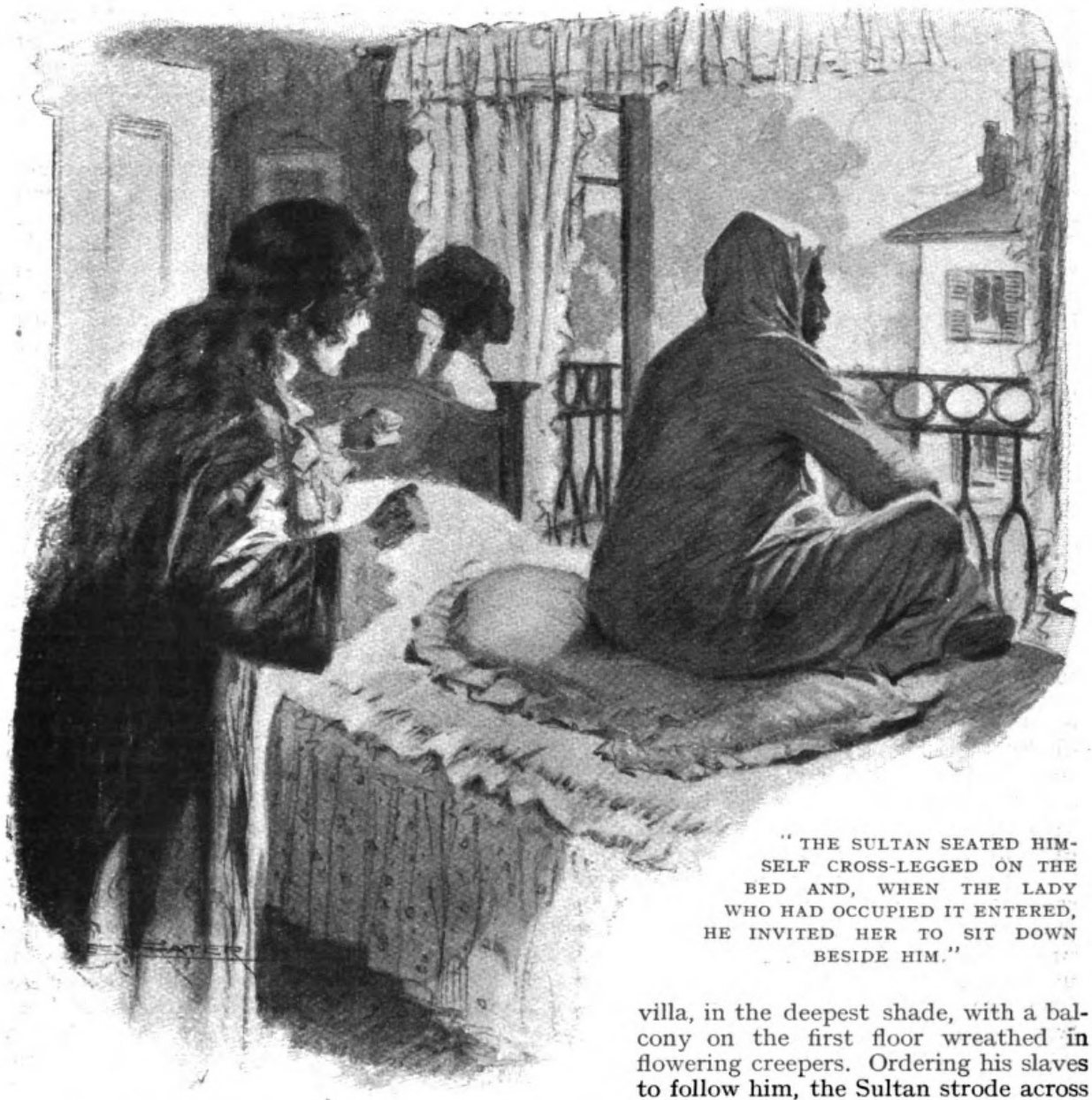
The Sultan's purchases were often embarrassing. One evening at sunset he visited a farm a few miles from Vichy, and insisted upon going all over it. In an enclosure were collected from twenty to thirty fine specimens of the beautiful white cattle for which this part of France is so justly famous. The Sultan decided to buy the lot, and gave the farmer his card, saying, "Send them round to-night to this address."

Now the address he gave was the Hotel Majestic, the most fashionable and magnificent of Vichy's palaces. About eleven o'clock that night, when life at the hotel was at its height, the manager sought the writer and announced the unexpected arrival of twenty-seven enormous cows in the courtyard of the hotel. And there, sure enough, meandering in and out of smart motor-cars, lowing gently into the ground-floor windows, were the Sultan's latest purchases. Where they passed the night the writer never knew, but the next day more suitable quarters were found for them.

"Have some thought for the happiness of your guests."

The Sultan dined in the great dining-room of the Hotel Majestic. His table, a very large one, for there were constant guests, was raised on a dais at one end of the room, which gave him an excellent view of all the diners—and the diners at the Hotel Majestic at Vichy in the height of the season are worth seeing. One night the Sultan appeared distrait at dinner, and his eye roved over the crowded room with an anxious and sympathetic expression. He spoke little, and it was difficult to get him to talk. At last he asked to see the manager, and that most amiable and deservedly popular gentleman, the proprietor of the hotel, appeared at once. "These people," said the Sultan, waving his hand towards the crowd at dinner, "are badly distributed. Many are not happy. Let us rearrange them. The old gentleman with the long grey beard has no right to be dining with the beautiful young lady in the big black hat, wearing a pearl necklace. There is a terrible disparity in their ages. She should be dining with the charming young officer over there"—he pointed to another table—"and the elderly lady, no doubt his mother, should be dining with old greybeard. You should have," and he addressed the proprietor, "some thought for the happiness of your guests. Now that lady there," and again he pointed in another direction, "is terribly bored. She has been tapping the edge of her plate with her fork for half an hour. She evidently dislikes extremely the gentleman with whom she is dining—probably her husband—but I have watched her, and she keeps looking at the young man, dining alone, with the waxed moustaches. Go and introduce them. Her husband hasn't spoken to her once this evening. He won't miss her—and you will

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"THE SULTAN SEATED HIMSELF CROSS-LEGGED ON THE BED AND, WHEN THE LADY WHO HAD OCCUPIED IT ENTERED, HE INVITED HER TO SIT DOWN BESIDE HIM."

make two people happy, and if the husband is dull, invite that strange lady with the red hair who is just coming in to sit down beside him. She will keep him occupied, I expect, to judge by her appearance."

But, alas, interesting as such an experiment would have been, it was impossible.

A Sense of Having Saved an Awkward Situation.

The first few days of the Sultan's visit were wet and cloudy, but one morning the August sun asserted itself with uncompromising efficiency. The villa reception-rooms faced south-east, and by eight o'clock in the morning were insufferably hot, for the Sultan refused to close the outside shutters, as he liked to see and to be seen. Half an hour later he decided to change his quarters. On the opposite side of the road was a charming villa, in the deepest shade, with a balcony on the first floor wreathed in flowering creepers. Ordering his slaves to follow him, the Sultan strode across the road, entered the villa, and found his way to the upstairs room with the balcony. It was gorgeous but empty. An immense bed, which had evidently been slept in, stood with its head against the wall. A word from His Majesty, and the bed was wheeled by the slaves into the window which opened on to the balcony, and, arranging the silk quilt and the lace-fringed pillows, the Sultan seated himself cross-legged, gazing down into the street below.

Now the Russian lady of title who had occupied the bed had retired a few moments previously into her adjacent *cabinet de toilette* to take her morning bath. Her ablutions completed, but not clad for a reception, she entered her room to find a dusky Oriental potentate, with his still more dusky slaves, in possession. The Sultan's politeness was extreme. He bade her welcome, and invited her to sit down beside him.

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An overflowing sense of humour on the part of the lady saved a situation which might otherwise have been embarrassing, and when the writer, hastily summoned, arrived, the lady, now more suitably arrayed, and her husband were thoroughly enjoying the novelty of the situation.

A Practical Joke.

Mulai Hafid was by no means always in low spirits. On one occasion we made a long motor trip to a famous watering-place, and after an official luncheon we ascended a neighbouring peak in a sort of funicular railway. In the railway carriage was a frock-coated and top-hatted gentleman of irreproachable get-up—a typical French *fonctionnaire*—polite, deferential, and with an official smile that must have taken long to acquire. Speaking through an interpreter, he informed Mulai Hafid that he was charged by the French Government to accompany and point out to His Majesty the beauties and spots of interest of the local scenery. Mulai Hafid in an equally polite reply thanked him, but hinted that he already had in his suite someone who knew the country extremely well, who would be only too pleased to assist in giving the required information, and he suddenly presented the writer to the French official. Needless to say, the writer had never been within a hundred miles of the spot, and had no idea whatever of its beauties or its historical associations, and even less of its geological formation. He appreciated, however, one thing: that Mulai Hafid meant to play a practical joke on the suave and black-gloved functionary.

The train started and began the steep ascent. Mulai Hafid, innocently seated between the French official and the writer, asked, "What are those rocks?" Before the authorized and official guide could reply, the writer had begun: "Those rocks are of the tertiary period, and contain many interesting remains—the skeletons of mammoths have been frequently found there, as well as the household utensils—a corkscrew amongst others—of primitive man." The poor functionary, too polite to protest, scarcely showed his astonishment, except in a furtive look at the writer. "And that wood?" continued the ex-Sultan. "That wood," the writer went on, "was the scene of the eating by a bear of the children who mocked at Elisha." This time the functionary gave a little start. Farther up the line were the ruins of what had once probably been a wooden shed, perched on a high rock. "And that?" asked the Sultan. "That," replied the writer, "is all that remains of Noah's Ark, which came to rest here after the subsiding of the Flood"—but the functionary was now only too palpably suffering tortures. He was on an official mission, and terribly serious. He could not see that the episode was a joke, and seemed sincerely to believe that Mulai Hafid, the guest of the French Republic, was being purposely deceived. "It may have been," he began politely, "that local tradition at some period claimed this spot as the resting-place of the Ark—of that I know nothing—but historical facts have clearly proved that it was elsewhere that that interesting event took place."

The Sultan and the Singer.

One night a gala performance of Meyerbeer's "Roma" was given in the Sultan's honour at the Opera. Now, singing in Morocco is a nasal monotonous repetition of words, with little expression and no gesture. The basso in the opera was an extremely corpulent gentleman, with a voice like thunder, accompanied by wild gesticulations. A few bars of recitative by the orchestra, and his great voice burst out and filled the theatre. To the Sultan the effect had nothing in common with music, and all he could imagine was that the performer was suffering intense, unbearable pain, more especially as the louder he sang the more he waved his arms about and beat his capacious stomach.

Springing to his feet, His Majesty cried, "Where is Dr. V——?" (Dr. V—— was his English doctor, who had accompanied him on his visit to France. "Where is Dr. V——? Find him quickly, someone. He may yet be able to save his life," and with an expression of terrible anxiety the Sultan's eyes alternately gazed fascinated at the singer or sought for the doctor in the gloomy recesses of the Royal box. It was not without difficulty that His Majesty was persuaded that the singer was suffering no pain; but that he was actually supposed to be giving pleasure to the audience he entirely refused to believe.

The Sultan was bored, and left the theatre before the end. The following morning he asked the writer what had taken place in the last act, and on being told of the terrible fate that almost all the characters in the tragedy had suffered, he replied: "I am sorry I did not stay. I should have sent for the manager and insisted that the piece should end happily. The young lady in white should have married the soldier with the big sword; the blind woman should have had her sight restored by an able doctor—and no one should have been stabbed or built up in a tomb."

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The KEY TO PARADISE

by John Cleveland

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD



IF it hadn't been for a small piece of jet, fashioned into the shape of a cross, I should have had no story to tell.

Second-Lieutenant Maxwell Preston's eye chanced to light upon it as it lay on the promenade by the sea at Scarmouth.

He stooped and picked it up.

It was a very little thing, and certainly of no great intrinsic value; but in the circumstances it was a find of importance. It might prove to be the key with which to open the gates of Paradise. So he thought. This may strike you as extravagant; but a love-stricken youth may be allowed a little latitude of thought and expression.

"I wonder if she dropped it," he said to himself. But whether it belonged to her or not, there was good excuse for an inquiry.

The she in question was rapidly receding into the distance, while the infatuated young officer stood stock still, with the little ornament in his hand. She might be going to bathe, or she might come back along the promenade. Anyhow, he followed swiftly upon her track.

She was the most beautiful girl in Scarmouth. He had said so again and again. I believe he had gone the length of declaring that she was the most beautiful girl in all England. But as yet he had never spoken to her. He did not even know her name, or anything about her disposition or social status. The entire sum of his information concerning her was that she was staying at Curtis's Boarding House in Sea View Terrace. That was all. She might be engaged, for anything he knew. But of one thing he was absolutely certain: he loved her, and would never, never love anyone else. He was a modest youth, with a full share of British reticence. In normal times he would have sought, by hook or by crook, as the phrase goes, a proper introduction. But now the old order had changed. The war, with its myriad ills and incalculable suffering, had yet done some good. It had in a great measure broken down the barriers of British stiffness. It was the summer of 1916. Preston had been given a commission in the East Anglian Fusiliers, after nearly two years' service with the Bloomsbury Rifles. His time here might be short. At any hour an order might come for him to proceed to the front with a draft. It behoved him to be prompt. Victory and peace were still far off. From over the sea came the muffled growl of guns. In Flanders the battle raged ceaselessly, and every minute men were dying and suffering unspeakable torture. But Love grows warm even under the shadow of Death.

Fortune favoured him. The sea was in a boisterous mood. She was not bathing this morning. She was coming back with her friend. Why would she never look directly at him? He had tried many times to catch her eye, and always in vain. Her serene grey eyes looked over his head with supreme indifference. He in all the pride and prestige of his officer's uniform might have been a Tommy or a fisherman, for any notice she took of him.

Now he stepped right in front of her, and raising his hand to his cap, said: "I think you dropped this?" And he held the little ornament towards her.

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At last he had the full benefit of her eyes. She looked him straight in the face. There was the gleam of white teeth, and the flush of dawn on her cheek. "I did," she said. "Thank you so much."

The little cross changed hands.

She really was remarkably handsome, a typical, sweet-natured English girl, of the modern, open-air, athletic type.

"I am glad to have it back," she said, putting the cross in a little hand-bag she carried.

She was about nineteen. Her companion was a year or so older, and was well worthy of attention, if Preston had had eyes for any other girl in the world. He had not troubled to think much about her social status, but he was delighted to find that she was of his own class. In civil life he was a solicitor, just out of his articles, and when the call came he was employed in his uncle's firm. His unknown divinity was evidently of the professional class. They spoke the same patois.

In ordinary times there would have been no excuse for further parley. But now, under the shadow of war, when the enemy was almost at the gate, the community of danger obliterated etiquette.

Frankness is generally the best policy; but Preston thought he was risking everything, when he said: "I shall be awfully obliged if you will allow me to walk a little way with you. I am only over from the camp till sunset, and I know no one in the town."

"Was that last sentence quite tactful?" she laughed; "it had the suggestion of any port in a storm."

"Pray, forgive me; I am a blundering ass. I sue *in forma pauperis*. I hope you will take pity on me."

"I am sure Kate and I have no objection; but I'm afraid you will find us rather dull company. We are not frivolous pleasure-seekers. We have only come to Scarmouth to get quite strong and well before going in for nursing."

"Red Cross?"

"Yes."

"Then we may meet again at the front. Perhaps you will have me through your hands."

"Pray don't be pessimistic. I hope we shall not meet in any such distressing circumstances. I see you are in the East Anglians. I have a cousin in the Second Battalion."

"Really? They're in Mesopotamia. Hard lines; the climate is horrible."

"He hasn't written for months."

"Very likely he wrote, but the mails get sunk. May I ask his name? We might chance to meet."

"Are you going East?"

"That's on the knees of the gods. We don't know. We might be sent off any day; but as to where, no one has the least notion. You have not told me your cousin's name."

"It is Captain Dimsdale. He was a year in France before he was sent East."

Preston inscribed the name upon the tablets of his memory.

They paced the promenade for quite an hour, talking without restraint about the war, about tennis, and about the London theatres.

Kate left the conversation to her friend, and spoke but little; but she looked from one to the other with an expression of sarcastic amusement. The complete enslavement of the young officer was obvious.

This was the breaking of the ice. Every time Preston could get away from camp he came into the town, and met the two girls somewhere. Their relations were perfectly cordial; but he was faced by a barrier of coquetry. He had found out that her name was Edith, for he had heard her friend call her by it. But he could learn no more. He had told her his name, why would she not disclose hers? To his earnest entreaties she laughingly replied with the formula: "We are only passing ships. We shall probably never meet again; what do names matter?"

Preston thought it rather hard, but bided his time.

It came out that both girls were art students; but here they could not use brush or pencil, for the stern Defence of the Realm Act interdicted sketching on the coast. One of Edith's pictures had been accepted by the Royal Institute, and she indulged hopes of some day scaling the barriers of the Royal Academy.

Closer intimacy did not lead to disillusionment. Preston's infatuation was strengthened every time he saw the girl, and he groaned under her light tyranny. He did not know her name or where she lived. She spoke vaguely of the studio which she and Kate shared, or used to share, at Chelsea, and that was all.

Kate was the difficult problem. She was always in evidence; no doubt by arrangement. Never a chance did he get of a heart-to-heart talk. Was he really making any headway? His native modesty made him doubtful. They had come to hand-shaking, and he fancied that his ardent pressure was returned; but the response was so faint that he could not be certain. Perhaps she was only amusing herself. There was anguish in the thought. By the middle of the following week he could bear the suspense no longer. He had a small independence from his mother, and his

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"I THINK YOU DROPPED THIS?' AND HE HELD THE LITTLE ORNAMENT TOWARDS HER."

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prospects in his uncle's old-established firm were bright. He had something to offer. Time pressed. Rumours of speedy departure were flying about, but wither no one in the battalion could tell.

At last his chance came. He was with the two girls outside a bookshop in the town. Kate said she must get H. G. Wells's latest book, which was just out, and entered the shop.

Preston seized the opportunity. "Miss Edith," he began hastily, "I like your friend. She is clever and good-natured and all that, but I sometimes find her a little *de trop*."

Edith opened her eyes in innocent wonder. "Do you?" she said; "how strange! I find Kate quite indispensable."

This was not encourgaing; but he had the sense to take it at its true value. "She is like your shadow," he said.

"Kate is very fond of me, and I am very much attached to her. It would be very unkind to leave her by herself."

There was no time for fencing. It was necessary to act with military promptitude. "Miss Edith," he said, in a voice that was not quite steady, "I shall take it as a great favour if you will allow me to see you alone for a few minutes. It is a matter of importance."

Edith stooped to stroke a collie dog, and glanced up at him sideways, with a slightly-heightened colour. There was no mistaking his earnestness. She thought he looked very handsome and determined.

Things move rapidly in war-time. Standing up straight, she toyed with her glove for a moment, then looked him frankly in the face. "If it is really a matter of importance, Mr. Preston," she said, "I can give you a few minutes."

"Thank you," he said, simply.

"Perhaps I shall be calling at the library at three in the afternoon to-morrow."

"Will you promise to tell me your name?"

"I promise that, at least."

There was no time for more. Kate rejoined them, and marked with a smile of amusement the blush on her friend's face and Preston's look of triumph.

Preston returned to camp, walking on air, as the phrase goes. He believed she was won.

As it chanced, the next day turned out wet. Edith had not reposed confidence in her friend. She would rather wait until she had seen Preston and heard what he had to say. But Kate understood. In the afternoon, when Edith proposed to go to the library to change a book, Kate said she would prefer to remain in the house. She knew there was no real reason for a visit to the library. When Edith set out, she somehow forgot to take the borrowed book with her. Kate smiled under cover of her Wells's novel, and said nothing.

An hour later, Edith returned. Her face was pale, and she looked very tired. She said she had a headache, and would go to her room and lie down.

In the days that followed the two girls walked together on the front, and one of them looked very sad, for the trim, well-set-up figure of Second-Lieutenant Maxwell Preston was seen no more.

Kate had been told all about it. Her comments were made in a spirit of sane common sense. "I am awfully sorry for you, dear," she said, "and I wouldn't say anything harsh for the world; but you have brought the trouble on yourself by your own folly. Why couldn't you have told him your name? Life is too short for silly games of that kind. You have put it out of his power to do anything. I am sure he would write, if he knew how to address you. No doubt he has gone off with a draft; they are often sent away very suddenly in the night. The very least you can do is to write to him, if it's only just a line to give your name and address."

"Oh, I could never do that," said Edith, with a catch in her voice.

"How deplorably absurd you are, Edith! I thought you were properly modern; I have no patience with such middle-Victorian timidity. Anyone could see the poor youth was desperately smitten with you. He was too far gone to treat me with ordinary politeness. I have a good mind to send your name and address to him myself."

"If you do, Kate, I shall never speak to you again."

"Oh, very well, but I think you are being very foolish."

Preston had gone with a draft. The order had come through very suddenly, and he could neither keep his tryst nor send a message.

While Edith and Kate were being trained as hospital nurses he was living amid high explosives somewhere in France. He was miserable, abjectly miserable. Other men, he knew, survived love disappointments, but he was quite sure that his was an exceptional case. He would never get over it; of that he was convinced. Edith had eluded him, but his search for her would never slacken. He had only one slight clue: her cousin, Captain Dimsdale, was in the second battalion of his regiment. But it was impossible to write to him. An inquiry about a beautiful cousin, whose name he did not know, would lay him open to misconception. Still, he might get in touch with the man, and in time obtain information about his relatives. But even this hope, faint as it was, proved

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illusory, for in a few weeks he saw Captain Dimsdale's name among the killed.

More than two years passed. We may regard Preston as a miracle of constancy. With most men, twenty-four months would be more than sufficient to wash out the memory of a little seaside love episode. But through all the fierce excitement of strife and the lassitude of wounds, the image of the Scarmouth girl remained undimmed. The hope of seeing her again never quite died. He did his duty manfully. A captaincy and a hardly-won Military Cross were proofs of his courage and capacity. He was twice wounded. The first wound involved a stay of four months in England. A visit to Scarmouth in the early days of convalescence led to nothing. Mrs. Curtis, the proprietress of the boarding-house in Sea View Terrace, refused in the most positive manner to furnish any information about her guests. In fact, she formed a highly unfavourable opinion of Captain Preston. She was convinced that "he was after no good."

Then he inserted advertisements in the Personal Column of two daily papers, imploring "Edith ——, who was in Scarmouth in July, 1916," to communicate with him. But these appeals were barren of results.

Back again to the inferno of the Western Front, and through the terrible German offensive of the spring of 1918. Then it fell out that a fragment of a bomb plugged him in the leg and sent him home once more. The wound left him with a slight limp and relegated him to civilian life.

The hush of a City solicitor's office was grateful and soothing after years of hideous uproar and strife. The war had had a sobering influence upon his character; but more than that, he was the victim of a settled melancholy. His face wore the look of a man who had failed in life.

Watchful and alert, he never walked the streets of London without scanning the face of every woman he met. In vain! The girl seemed to have passed out of his life. Perhaps she had died on duty, like so many others, or she might have met her death on a hospital ship. These were possibilities. Still, a faint, lingering hope survived. He confided his secret to no one. Your modern young man is not tolerant of romantic constancy, and life in the Army had not steeled Preston against ridicule.

One Saturday evening he was dining at his uncle's house at Putney. At the request of many friends and comrades he had been photographed, and dutifully presented his uncle with a copy.

The old solicitor had no son of his own, and naturally took a pride in his soldier nephew. After dinner, when the cigars were alight, Mr. Preston drew the portrait from its covering of tissue paper and examined it closely. In his youth he had been an amateur photographer long before the advent of dry plates, and still took a keen interest in the art. "Good, sound work," he said. "Why, you haven't been taken in civilian dress for about five years. You look better in uniform, Max; you seem to have shrunk considerably. And I wish you had looked a little brighter. There's a settled gloom upon you. Hope it will wear off in time. Anyone would think you belonged to the losing side. Hand me the magnifying-glass; you will find it in the end drawer, there. Thanks." He took another long look. "Capital," he said, "the pose is easy, and the figure is well lighted. I think on the whole Barry's is about the best firm in London."

"Quite. Their work is always top-class, and they don't forget to charge for it."

"Well, they can't afford to be out of the fashion. But what's this, Max? You haven't joined the Romish Church, have you?"

"No, sir, and I have no such intention. Why do you ask?"

"Why, because of this cross you have on your watch-guard."

"A cross on my watch-guard! I never wore such a thing in my life."

"I don't see why you should be ashamed of it, my boy. If it hadn't been there, it couldn't have come out in the picture. Photography doesn't lie."

"Oh, it must be some imperfection in the plate."

"Nonsense, nonsense! It is clear and sharp enough; looks like a cross of jet."

Preston's face paled, and when he spoke again it was in a changed voice.

"Let me look at it, if you please, sir," he said.

Mr. Ephraim Preston handed the photograph over, favouring his nephew with a shrewd look. "I dare say your young eyes will be able to see the cross without the magnifying-glass," he said.

Preston bent his pale face over the print. There was the cross perfectly distinct. It showed up plainly against the light summer suit he had been taken in. He was surprised that he had not noticed it before. "I can't understand it," he said, looking blankly at his uncle.

"Do you mean to tell me that you never wore anything of the kind?"

"Never."

"Well, my boy, I never knew you to tell an untruth, and it's absurd to suppose that you would prevaricate over such a trifling matter. I am bound to believe you. It seems that miracles do happen, in spite of

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the sceptics. Are you sure you had nothing at all attached to your watch-guard ?"

"Nothing, sir. Here is the thing, you can see for yourself. I was taken, wearing it just as it is."

"Then there's only one solution," said the man of law, "someone must have painted it in."

"I don't see how they could," said Preston, taking up the photograph again, and examining it closely. "No, it's not on the surface, I am positive of that. See. He moistened his handkerchief and rubbed the print lightly.

The solicitor raised his eyebrows and drummed the table with his fingers.

"You know something about photography, sir; could it have been put in on the negative ?"

"No, no; if it had been put in, as you suggest, it would print dead white."

"So it would. Well, I'm done. I can make nothing of it." Preston sat smoking the excellent cigar his uncle had given him, and dreamed dreams. He did not dare to hope yet, but he had a fancy that Edith was in some way connected with the mystery. Then a new thought struck him. "I suppose you have never gone in for psychical research, sir ?" he asked.

"Eh, what ?" cried the solicitor, not sure that he had heard aright.

"Psychical research."

"What, I ! My dear boy, what a question ! If I had any time to spare, I could find several less ridiculous methods of wasting it. I hope you have detected no signs of senile decay in me yet, Max ?" said Mr. Preston, grimly.

"Certainly not, sir; only some recent investigators claim to have obtained photographs of thoughts, and I was wondering——"

Mr. Preston indulged in a hearty laugh. "Indeed," he said, wiping his eyes. "I really cannot follow you into the realms of fancy. That kind of thing wouldn't do at all, Max. We can't allow the camera to take the bread from the mouths of counsel. No, I don't think the photographic studio will replace the criminal courts in our time. I am surprised you read such utter rubbish, my boy. Photographing a man's thoughts, indeed ! You have not the excuse of shell-shock. What vast possibilities are opened ! Lying would go out of fashion. We should all live in the Palace of Truth, and no thief or murderer would think it worth while to plead 'not guilty.'"

"I didn't say I believed it, sir. I have never gone into the subject. I mean to call at Barry's on Monday."

"What for ?"

"To try to elucidate the mystery."

"Think it worth while ? Bond Street is a long way from the City."

"I should go if the firm was at Edinburgh or Calcutta."

"Come, come, isn't that rather extravagant ? I shall begin to think that little jet cross means something to you."

"To be frank, sir, it does. I had such a thing in my possession for a few minutes two years ago."

"Oh, no doubt it was the beginning of a little romance," said Mr. Preston, with a sarcastic smile. "Be careful, my boy; beware of sentiment; your poor father was rather too much given to it. Well, let's go upstairs."

Preston spent the greater part of Sunday roaming about the West-end, and scanning the face of every girl he met, with hungry scrutiny. The day seemed interminable, but it wore through at last.

On Monday the work at the office kept him closely occupied all the forenoon. On the instant of release, he started for Bond Street.

In the splendidly-furnished reception-room at Barry's a tall, stately lady came forward and asked his pleasure.

"I have merely called to ascertain if you can explain a most extraordinary circumstance," he said, producing the photograph. "You see this little black cross attached to my watch-guard ? I don't understand how it can have come out in the picture, I was not wearing it at the time, and I have never had anything of the kind on my watch-guard."

The tall lady favoured him with a freezing look, and took the photograph in her hand. After a brief scrutiny, she said, in a tone of finality, "You must have worn it. Are you suffering from loss of memory ?"

"Certainly not. I have been at the front for nearly four years, but I have not had shell-shock, and I have no neurasthenic symptoms."

She raised her eyebrows, then slightly shrugged her ample shoulders. "What is it you want ?" she demanded.

"Can you explain the mystery ?"

"I fail to see any mystery. We don't deal in psychical phenomena. The camera only records what is placed in front of it; I thought that elementary fact was common knowledge. I don't think I can help you."

"Pardon me, I am not to be put off in that manner. I assure you I have never in my life worn anything on my watch-guard. Here it is, a plain gold albert, with nothing attached. My friends have noticed the cross, and remarked upon it. I think I am entitled to an explanation."

"I am sorry, but what can I do for you ?"

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"'AT LAST!' HE SAID, HOARSELY, AND, UNDETERRED BY THE FIERCE GLARE OF THE MANAGERESS, HIS ARM STOLE ROUND HER WAIST."

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said the manageress wearily. She was losing patience.

"I ask you to produce the negative," said Preston, firmly. "I think that is the least you can do." He objected very strongly to the majestic lady's manner.

She lifted her shapely nose and turned away. She picked up the photograph which Preston had placed on the table, and touched a bell.

A pale, red-haired girl appeared from the inner recesses of the place, to whom a sharp order was given.

There was no one else in the reception-room at the time. Preston stood swinging his cane in a state of nervous expectancy.

In a few minutes the red-haired girl returned with a negative in her hand.

The lady took it from her, without a word, and held it up to the light. After a moment's examination, she turned to Preston, with a sudden access of respect. "You are right, sir," she said, "I see the negative has been tampered with. A cross has been very skilfully cut out of the film, and, of course, the result is as you see. I am very sorry. Such a thing has never happened in this establishment before, and it shall certainly never happen again. If you will return all the prints we shall be happy to give you another sitting."

"Was it done by accident?"

"I fear not. It looks like a piece of deliberate mischief. Please wait one moment." She touched the bell again, and gave another order to the red-haired girl. She was now all affability and friendliness. "It is most unfortunate," she said; "I can't understand it at all. I am sure we are deeply obliged to you for taking the trouble to come here and make the complaint. I have sent for the young lady who retouched your negative. Ah, here she is. Now, Miss Ambrose, perhaps you will explain what you mean by this outrage."

But Edith Ambrose did not explain. She stood before the autocratic manageress white, trembling, and silent.

Preston's hat and cane fell to the floor. He went to the girl, took her cold hand, and drew her arm through his. "At last!" he said, hoarsely, and, undeterred by the fierce glare of the manageress, his arm stole round her waist.

Edith's eyes were heavy with tears, and her head sank on his shoulder. The manageress, scandalized and bitterly hostile, regarded the pair with implacable eyes. "As soon as you have recovered yourself, Miss Ambrose," she said, "you will put on your things and leave at once. You are dismissed, understand that."

"It was the only way," Preston murmured, enigmatically.

"I don't know what you mean, sir," said the manageress, viciously, "but you are behaving with extraordinary freedom. Perhaps, as your business here is ended, you will allow Miss Ambrose to retire. This is no place for assignations."

"I shall be waiting for you outside, dear," he whispered to Edith, who made a hurried exit.

Then he addressed the outraged manageress. "I shall not trouble you for another sitting," he said. "If ever I get hold of that little cross I shall wear it to my dying day."

She looked at him with withering contempt, but said nothing.

"There is a great deal you don't understand," he went on. "Miss Ambrose was not to blame. If she continued in your service, I am quite sure she would never do anything of the kind again. Good afternoon." In truth, he hardly knew what he was saying.

The manageress coolly turned her back and walked away.

Of course they met outside, in something under ten minutes, and retired into the first tea-shop that offered. They had a secluded corner all to themselves, where he told her what he had intended to say before he was ordered to France, and asked her a question; but that was superfluous, for her answer was already given. She had suffered much in the past two years, but he thought her more beautiful than ever. There was no pallor on her face now. She told him about her work in the hospitals in Salonica, and how her strength had failed after six months. Her friend, Kate Fenton, had been in the hospitals in France, and had kept on till the Armistice, when she had gone back to her art work. But Edith's art work was not marketable in these bustling times, and she was soon at the end of her resources. Her parents were dead, and she was all alone. A friend had advised her to take up retouching, at which she had become highly proficient. No, she had never forgotten him, and never given up hope. Of course, she knew at once it was his negative; there was no mistaking the shape of his face. Then the thought of putting in the cross had come to her. Didn't he think it dreadfully bold and unwomanly? Well, he didn't answer that question till they were quite alone. He must promise never to tell Kate about it. She was still living with Kate.

Had she kept the little cross safe?

Of course she had, and she produced it from some mysterious receptacle. Preston took it from her, and kissed it when no one was looking. He had it attached to his watch-guard, where it still hangs.

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THE

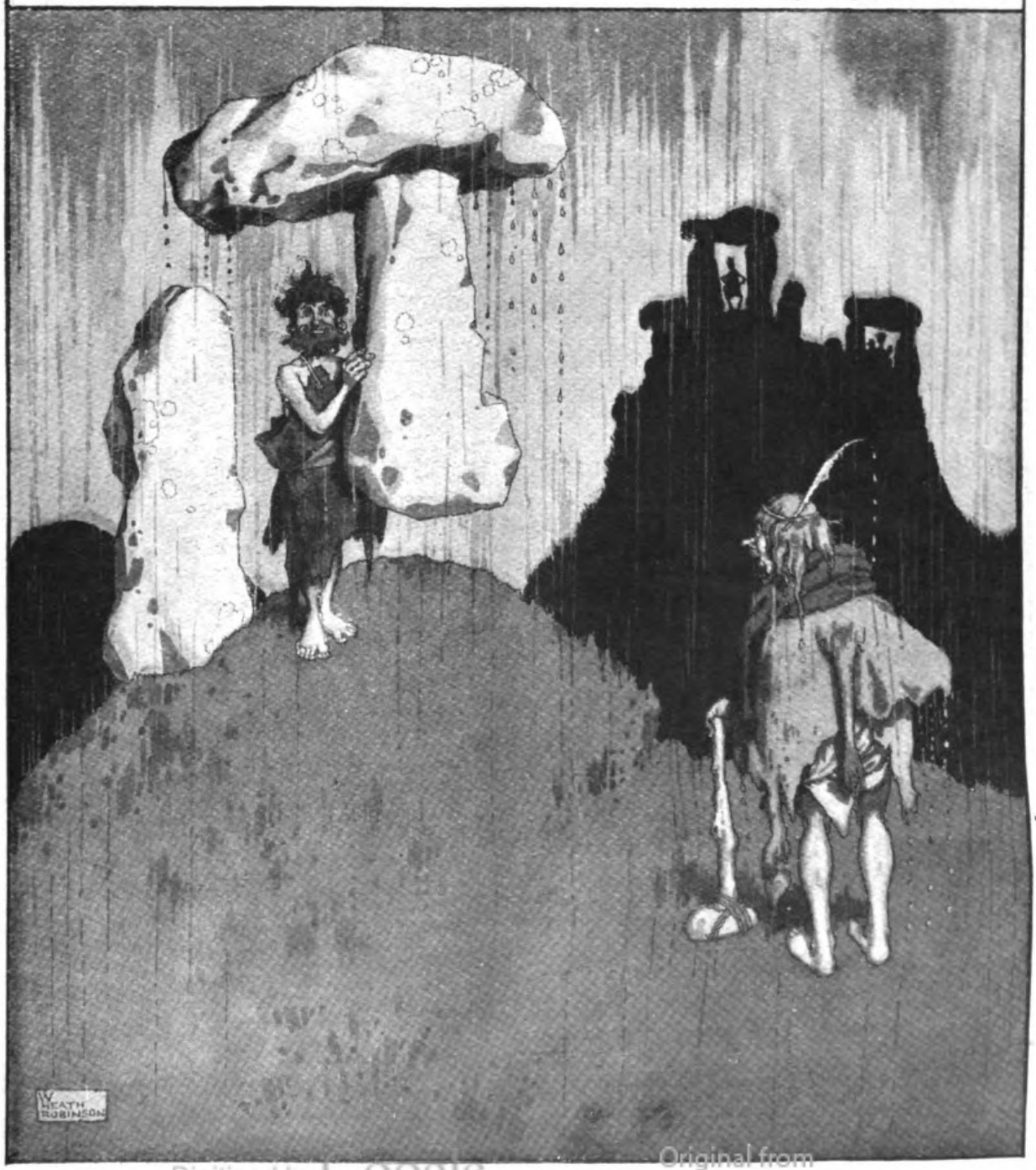
Outside Line of History

(With apologies to Mr. H. G. Wells)

By W. HEATH ROBINSON.

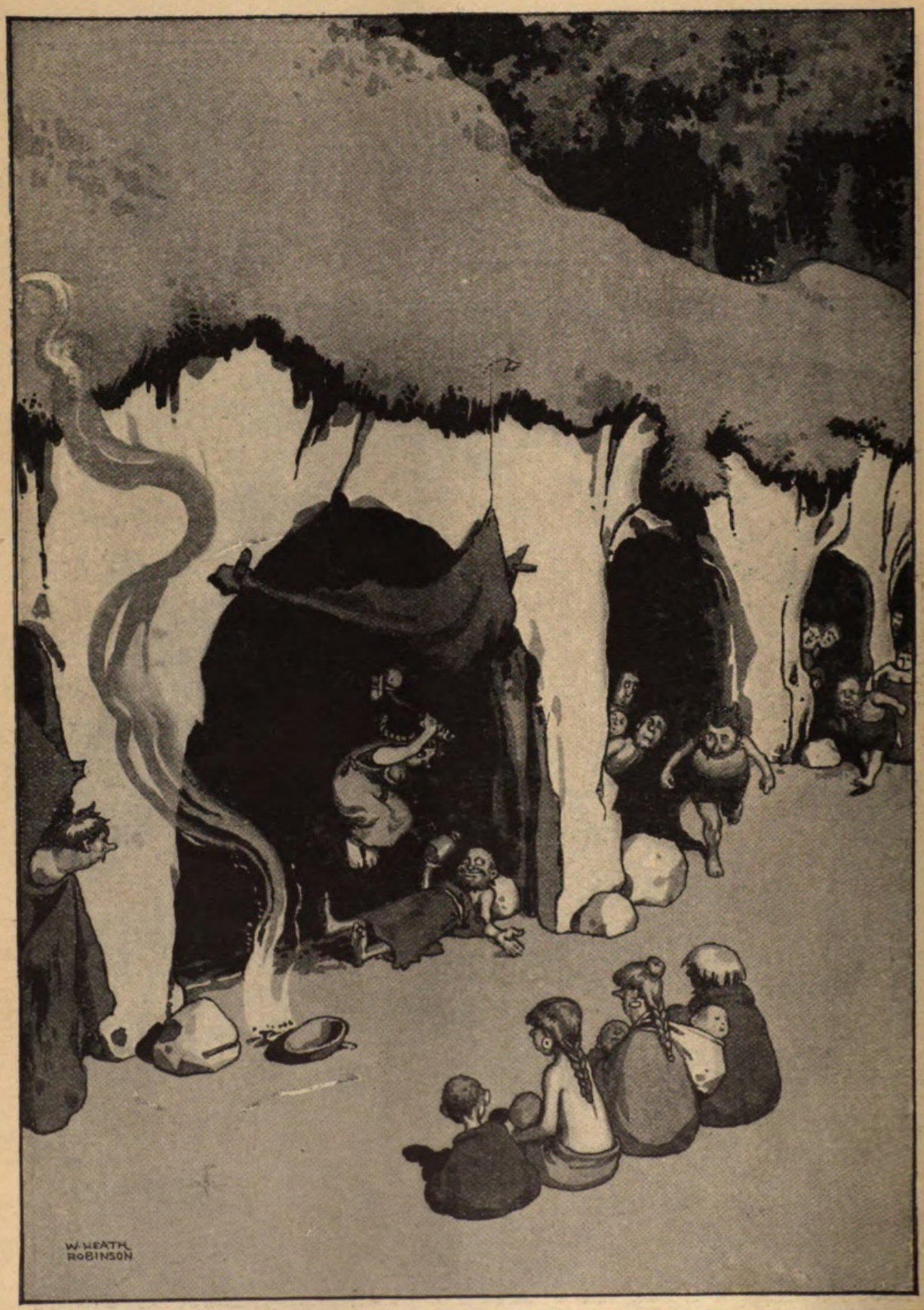


THE ORIGIN OF THE HIGH HEEL



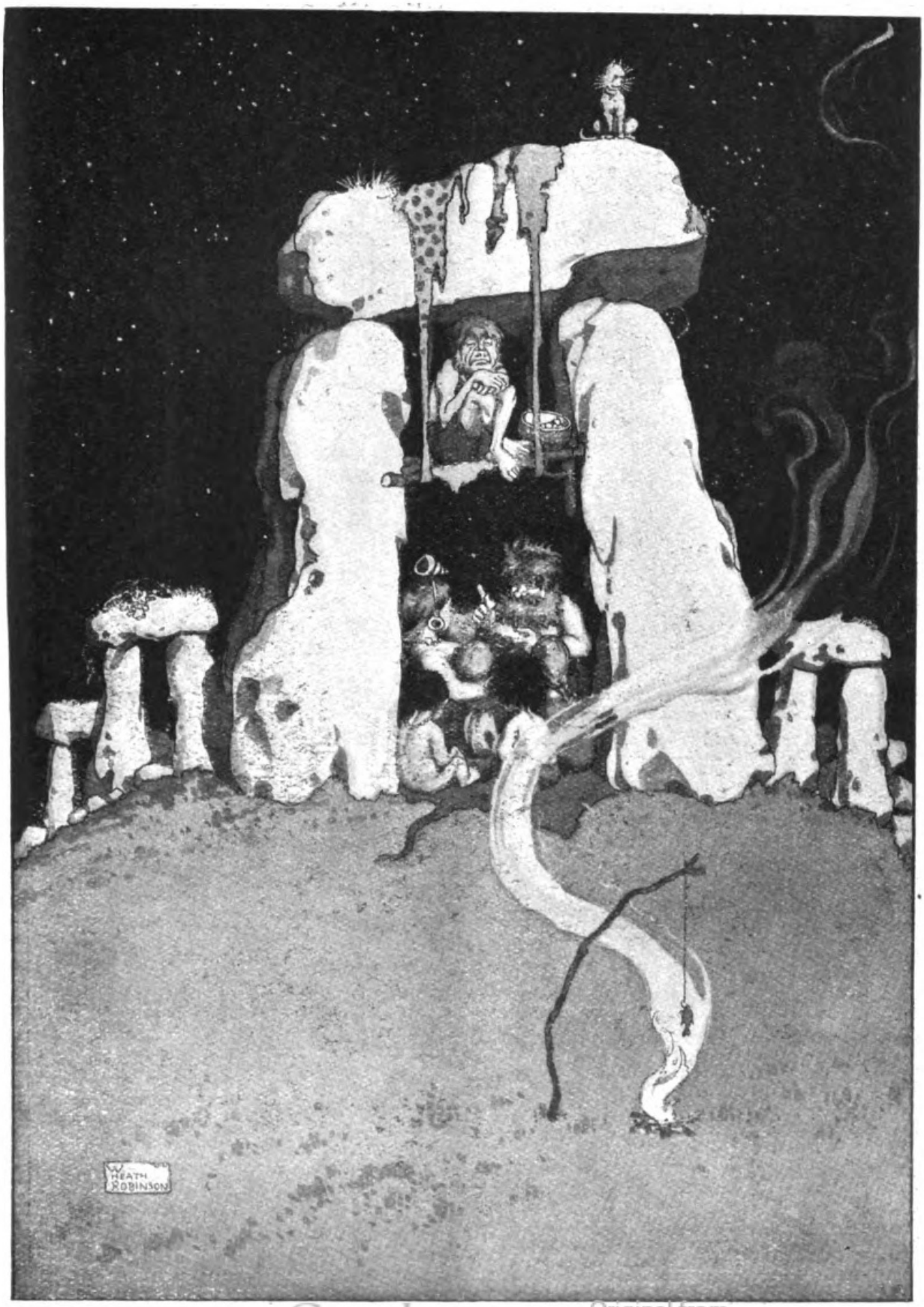
THE FIRST UMBRELLA.

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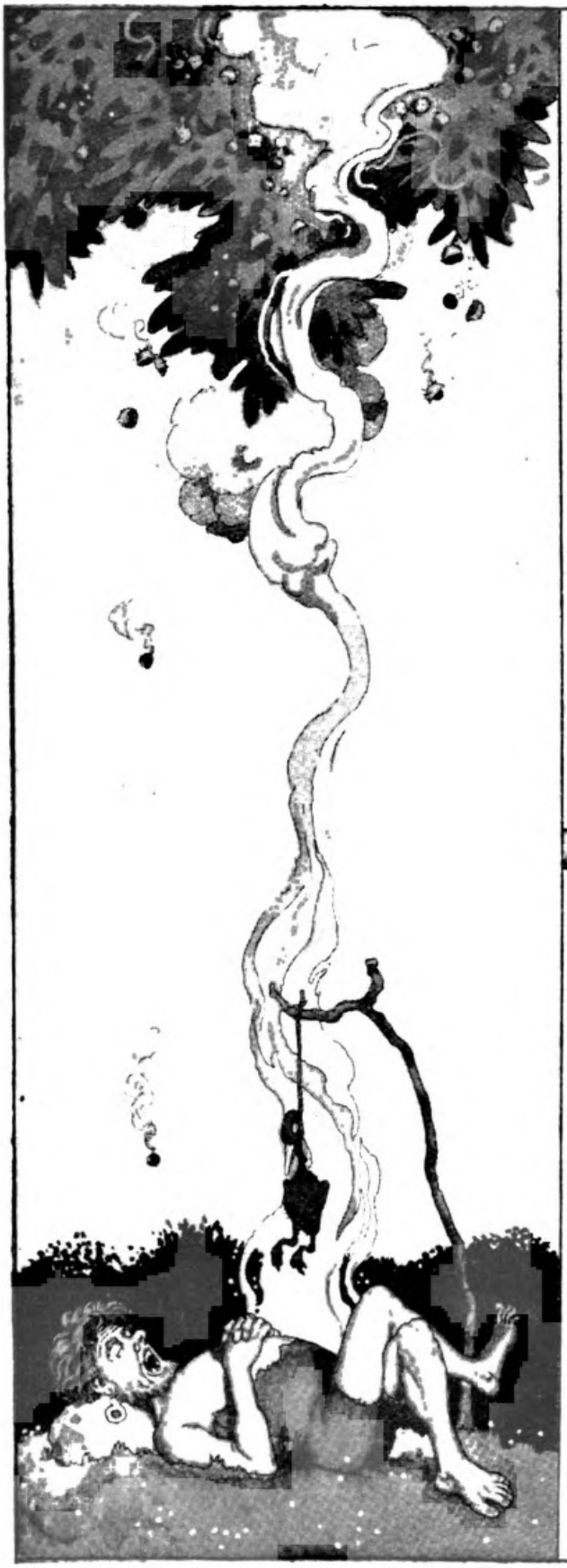
DOMESTIC DIFFERENCE AMONGST THE CAVE-DWELLERS.
Supposed Origin of the Drama.

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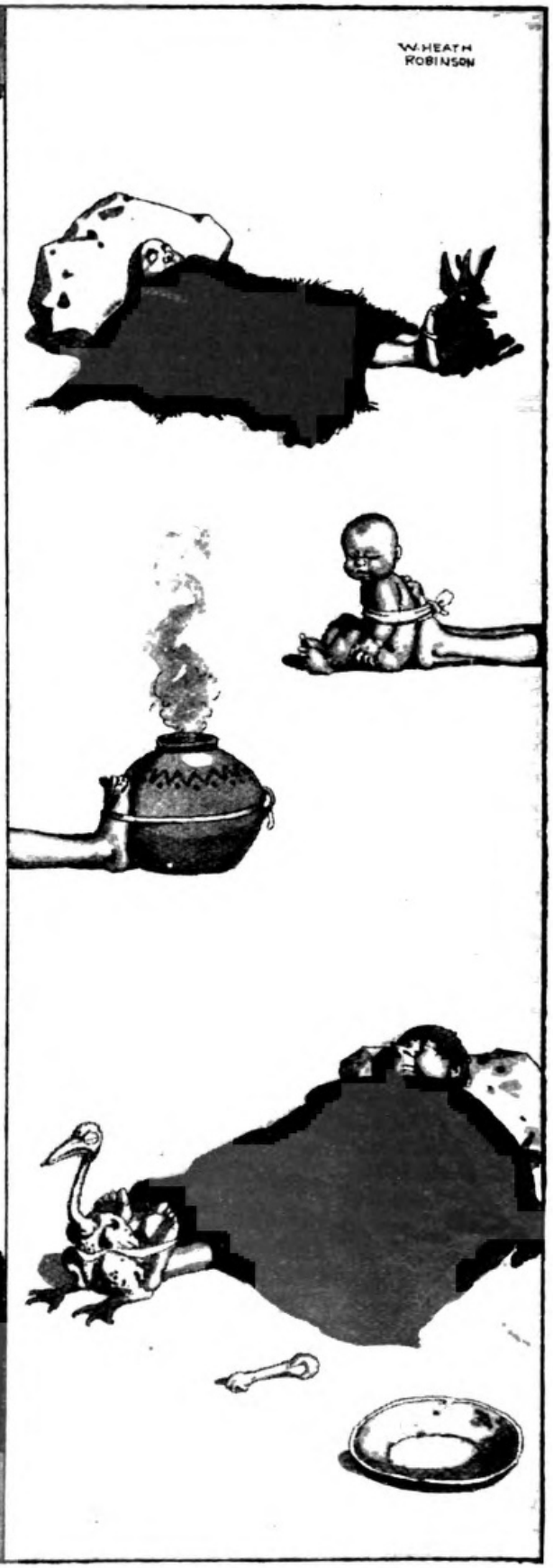


THE FIRST LODGER.

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THE FIRST ROAST CHESTNUT.



NEANDERTHAL FOOT-WARMERS FROM CAVE DRAWINGS.

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"LOOK AT HIS NOSE!"

By LYNN DOYLE

Illustrated by CHAS CROMBIE

IT was well known round Ballygullion, began Pat Murphy, that wee Misther MacDermott, the schoolmaster, was far from bein' a teetotaller. All the same, he was never a man to dhrink by himself when he could get company. As he used to put it in his learned way, the chief use of whisky was to promote friendly inthercourse among neighbours. But, troth, most of the inthercourse the Masther had with his neighbours was out of an armchair in Michael Cassidy's pub; an' the old sister that kept house for him got very lonely at times sittin' at home.

She was terrible proud an' up on herself through an uncle bein' a solicitor—if that's anythin' to be proud about—an' wouldn't mix with the common people of the town, as she called everybody but them that was too uppish themselves to consort with her, an' that threw her lonelier still.

So as long as I can remember she always had some kind of a pet or other hanging about the house. It was generally some fancy kind of an animal; for with the notion she had of the gentility of the family she aye copied Miss Armitage of the Hall, or some other big bug.

But about the time I'm speakin' of the wheezy old pug she had been motherin' died of bein' too well looked afther an' left her clean desolate, an' the wee Masther found her desperate carnaptious when he'd come home of a night. So he made up his mind that he'd either have to turn temperance or find a new pet for her, an' one night he started out for Mr. Rutherford's of the Warren to see if he could raise anythin' of fish, flesh, or fowl that would keep her company when he was on the rampage.

An' Mr. Rutherford's was the right place to go. He'd been crossed in love, they said, when he was only a young fellow, an' never thried a second venture, but took to dumb animals. Even when he'd been manager of the bank his house was like a menagerie; an' when he retired—I heard tell it was over a pet monkey chawin' up a packet of ten-pound notes—all the animals he had before was nothin' to what he gathered about him now that he had a house of his own.

He was desperate glad to see the Masther, and nothin' would do him but the Masther must stay for dinner; an' the Masther, knowin' by old experience that dinner at Mr. Rutherford's was a matther of more than eatin', was only too glad to oblige him. A mighty fine dinner they had, by all accounts, the Masther with two days' thirst on him through keepin' the sisther company at night, an' Mr. Rutherford with mebbe more; for he was another man could take no good of a dhrink unless there was company with it. Between every glass ould John, the man-servant, would be ordhered to bring in a fresh bird or beast for the Masther to pick from, till by the time the pair of them was at the second decanter the dinin'-room was like the Zoological Gardens in Dublin.

By this time the Masther was clean beyond all discretion in the way of picking a pet for anybody short of a Zulu, an' nothin' took his fancy so much as a big baboon Mr. Rutherford kept chained to the leg of the table. For, as the wee man said, forbye that the beast could smoke an' dhrink whisky just as if he was a Christian, he was the nearest imitation of a man his sisther was ever likely to get at her time of life.

But afther sittin' on the floor beside the baboon for a quarther of an hour thryin' to teach him to say "slainthe" before he took down his dhrink, he made up his mind that he was an unmannerly brute, an' would have nothin' more to do with him.

Then he would only have somethin' that he could bring home in the crown of his tall hat; but afther two pet guinea-pigs had near clatted the scalp off his head, ould John—that by this time was the only sensible bein' in the room, barrin' the animals—got him persuaded as far as the stone steps at the

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hall door with a talkin' parrot in a cage. Before they were half-roads down the steps ould John had to run back into the house to save Misther Rutherford from the baboon; an' the Masther an' the parrot fell down the rest of the flight into a fancy bush, an' started for Ballygullion at two o'clock in the mornin'.

About half-roads between Misther Rutherford's an' Ballygullion was Miss Armitage's demesne; an' of course it be't to be that very night that the sergeant of police an' one of the constables was watchin' for poachers.

The constable was hidin' at the Warren side of the demesne when the Masther came round the corner. An' if ye're to believe the constable it was worth while bein' there.

Ye must know that the parrot was brought to Misther Rutherford's by Sailor Sam, as they called Widow Donaghy's son; an' most of its expressions—that wasn't bad language—was seafarin' talk.

By the time it and the Masther had got the length of Miss Armitage's, the parrot had made up its mind it was out in some by-ordinary kind of a hurricane. An' troth a stormy passage it must have had.

What with the Masther dhroppin' the cage an' gettin' it between his legs an' thrippin' over it, an' fallin' with it again gates an' hedges an' walls, the half of the spokes was hangin' out an' jinglin' along the road.

The parrot might ha' quit the cage any time it liked; but I suppose it wanted to stick to the ship; for it was hangin' on to the sound wires like grim death an' givin' ordhers like an admiral.

"Port your helm!" shouts the parrot, as they come round the corner with a lurch. "Hard a port!"

"I wondher at ye," says the Masther, fetchin' up in the middle of the road; "I wondher at ye, thryin' to teach navigation to a man that has thrained two full sea-captains an' a second mate. Port!" sez he; "ye're makin' me dhry talkin' of port. Besides, we've had no luck with it. Didn't we go to port at Ann Doonan's corner, an' left the tail of my coat on the garden railin's? No," sez he, "I'll go to starboard if it was only to spite ye!" An' with that he swings to the right an' slap into the demesne wall.

When the constable got the length of them the Masther was sittin' up in the middle of the wreckage of the cage an' apologizin' to the parrot, that was perched on his hand an' swearin' something lamentable.

"Halloa, constable!" sez the Masther. "You're just in the nick of time. There has been a shipwreck on the high seas, an' we want a helpin' hand off the rocks."

"I doubt," sez the constable, a bit of a wag himself, "I doubt ye'll have to go into dock to refit."

"Ye don't mean to say ye'd go back on an old friend in musfortune," sez the Masther.

"Divil a bit of me," sez the constable; "but the sergeant's comin' up the road."

"The honour of the MacDermotts is in your hands, constable," sez the Masther;



"'HALLOA, CONSTABLE!' SEZ THE MASTHER. 'YOU'RE JUST IN THE

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"for ye know what kind of friendship is between the sergeant an' me."

"You're not too bad," sez the constable. "Could ye walk past him?"

"I doubt it," sez the Masther. "I could do fraction sums in my head, but my legs is as dhrunk as Bacchus."

"Sit where ye are then," sez the constable, "an' mebbe he'll walk past ye in the dark. But stop that cussed bird first of all."

"I've thried to soothe its feelin's every way possible," sez the Masther; "but short of a written apology I doubt it's not goin' to be content."

"Wring its neck," sez the constable.

"I couldn't do it," sez the Masther. "Sure the principal seat of enjoyment is in the neck. What pleasure would I have in life if my own neck was wrung? No," sez he, "I brought the unfortunate bird into throuble, an' I'll bring it out. If I'd taken its advice an' turned to the left——"

"Set it on the road an' put your tall hat on it," sez the constable, "an' it'll mebbe keep its neb shut till the sergeant's past. Here he's comin'; quick now!—an' do you sit quiet."

"Any of them ruffians about, constable?" sez the sergeant as he come up. "Nobody. Then we may as well get back to barracks." An' with that his toe took the tall hat.

"Port your helm!" screeches the parrot. "Port your helm, blast ye!"

"Mother of Mercy!" shouts the sergeant. "What is it?" an' flashes on his lamp. The light just took the Masther between the eyes.

With an ordinary Bench the Masther was as safe as a house, an' the sergeant knowed it. So what does he do but have a special court next day with nobody but the R.M.; an' before the Masther's friends could beat up another magistrate or two he was fined in half a crown an' costs.

The Masther was very sore about the catch the sergeant had got at him.

"I wouldn't ha' minded the fine so much, Pat," sez he to me; "for at the worst the price of a quart would cover costs an' all. But it's the disgrace of the thing. To think that a man of my experience should be that far through on the one or two dhrinks I had that night that he couldn't pass himself before a sergeant of police."

"The divil a dhrunk ye were at all, Masther," sez I, flattherin' him. "Ye were as sober as I am this minit. Doesn't everybody know the grudge the sergeant has again ye? Mebbe 'twas himself was dhrunk."

"He takes a dhrop now an' then, I'll give in," sez the Masther. "The man has his good points. But thrue enough he has a spite again me, an' he give me no fair play this time."

"Never mind, though, Pat," sez the wee man. "I have the parrot still; an' it's a great comfort to the sisther, an'll maybe be the means of me gettin' some of my own back



NICK OF TIME. THERE HAS BEEN A SHIPWRECK, AN' WE WANT A HELPIN' HAND OFF THE ROCKS.'"

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from that red-nosed ruffian. A man that can't take a dhrink without his nose turnin' all the colours of the rainbow should keep to buttermilk."

I done my best to get out of the wee man what notion was in his head; but it was no use. But about two months afterwards, when I'd forgotten all about it, he sent word for me to come an' see him. When I went into the parlour there was a whole crowd of the Masther's comrades—Misther Anthony the solicitor, an' the docther, an' the Bank cashier, an' a lot more. They never heard me comin' in with the laughs of them.

An' there in the middle of them was the parrot struttin' about the table an' lookin' as wise as an ould man.

"What about the sergeant, Polly?" sez the Masther.

The crather cocked up its wee beady eye like a flash.

"The sergeant's dhrunk," it sez, away deep down in its throat. "The sergeant's dhrunk. Look at his nose. Very sad, very sad." An' then away it goes in a rhyme ye could hardly follow, it went that quick: "Look at his nose, look at his nose, look at his nose," with a great kink of laughin' at the end; an' then very slow an' serious again: "Very sad—very sad."

Ye could ha' tied us all with a sthraw before it had done.

"How in the name of wondher did ye thrain it, Masther dear?" sez I.

"In troth," sez he, "it was Misther Anthony here did the most of it. That croakin' low down in the throat is mighty dhry work; an' if I'd persevered in it I might ha' been obliged to depart from my well-known temperance principles. Do ye think that's the best ye can do, Misther Anthony?" sez he.

"There's no man in Ireland could improve on it," sez Mr. Anthony, cocksure as usual.

"Very well," sez the Masther. "The sergeant's due up the road in five minits. Come on till ye see the fun."

So out we goes into the garden, an' in a minit we hears the thramp, thramp of the sergeant's feet.

"What about the sergeant, Polly?" sez the Masther, tossin' the bird up into a bush.

"The sergeant's dhrunk!" squawks Polly, at the top of its lungs—if a bird has lungs. "The sergeant's dhrunk!"

The sergeant stopped dead, an' his face turned as red as his nose, an' that's sayin' a good deal.

"That's MacDermott," sez he to the constable that was with him. "That's that scoundrel, MacDermott. Come on, constable."

"Round the house with ye, boys," sez the Masther, "an' leave me to it."

We weren't right hid till in comes the sergeant into the garden, with a rush that near took the gate off the hinges.

"Arrest this man," sez he, pointin' at the Masther, with the very fingers thrimblin' wi' rage; "arrest him for dhrunken disorderliness."

"Easy, constable," sez the Masther; "easy. What's the matter with the sergeant?"

"The sergeant's dhrunk," shouts the parrot from the bush above his head. "Look at his nose!"

The sergeant leapt about two feet perpendicular in the air.

"Arrest the man's confederate, constable," sez he, fair foamin'; "an' I'll take *him* meself."

I'm thinkin' he'd ha' left very little of the Masther if he'd got his hands on him; but just as he gathered himself to lepp at the wee man he looked up an' seen the bird.

"Dear me," sez the parrot, "look at his nose; very sad, very sad, very sad."

"If ye're goin' to arrest the fowls of the air, sergeant," sez the Masther, "I doubt ye'll have to provide flyin' machines for the force. Can I not have a bird singin' its simple melody round my house without the majesty of the law steppin' in?"

"The sergeant's dhrunk," sez the parrot; "look at his nose."

"Dear me," sez the Masther, "ye'd think the bird knew what it was sayin'."

"Take that brute down," roars the sergeant, "or I'll have you an' it in the lock-up in two minits."

"Lock it up if ye can catch it," sez the Masther; "but I question if it's legal. Ye can sue the bird for libel," sez he, "though I don't see what ye'd make out of it. It's only a man of sthraw; an' I doubt if ye'd even recover your costs."

"This is a plot, sir," sez the sergeant, madder than ever; "a confounded thrick to make me ridiculous. Will ye or will ye not bring that bird down an' wring its neck?"

"Look at his nose," squawks the parrot. "Very sad, very sad."

"The bird is seriously concerned about the matther," sez the Masther. "Ye should thry rice-powder."

The sergeant paid no heed to him at all, but throws off his belt an' helmet an' up into the bush. He'd ha' been wiser stayed on the ground. The force is a fine upstandin' body of men, but noways intended for hoppin' on twigs, an' just as the sergeant's hand was within six inches of the parrot's tail the branch he was on give way an' he fell into the privet hedge. It was the savin' of his life that he bled his nose on the post of the garden gate; for barrin' that nothin' could ha' saved him from apoplexy.

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As it was he was speechless with the rage. He just shook his fist in the Masther's face, picks up the belt an' the helmet an' off up the road like a madman, leavin' the constable to follow the best way he could.

The next day the whole town of Ballygullion was ringin' with the news that a summons was out again the Masther for indecent behaviour in causin', as the summons said—for I seen it myself—" a certain bird or fowl, to wit a parrot, to use language in the public street calculated to lead to a breach of the peace," an' askin' the Masther to " show cause why the said bird or fowl should not be destroyed."

I had no doubt in my mind that Mr. Anthony had a finger in the pie, for I'd seen him colloguin' with Blake, the opposition solicitor, the night before, an' when the pair of them separated Blake went over to the police barracks an' Mr. Anthony took away off to Major Donaldson's; an' when I seen the Major's name on the summons I put two and two together at once.

All Ballygullion was wild with delight about it. You could ha' sold seats in the Petty Sessions Court-house at a pound a head. People could talk of nothin' else, an' all sorts of jokes an' stories went flyin' round. The sergeant was undherstood to have got down not less than two hundhred-weight of law books from Dublin to read up the case, an' though everybody knew Mr. Anthony was conductin' the defence, it wasn't expected that the Masther would let him have it all to himself.

I was very much of the same opinion.

The wee man was all vexed about the affair.

" I should never have let that mad-head Anthony into the business at all, Pat," sez he. " Not that I would be one to intherfere with the innocent amusements of the populace, mind ye, but before all's over the parrot may come to a violent end, an' that would be a disasther to the MacDermott household. Apart altogether from the valuable assistance it gave me in gettin' a bit of my own back from the sergeant, I'm attached to the bird. I have trailed up many a wee fellow by the lugs from the A B C to the Sixth Reading Book that hadn't half the intelligence of it. An' as for my sisther," sez he, " the loss of it would break her heart. Since it has deserted the use of bad language for the legitimate female occupation of scandalizin' its neighbours, it has twined itself round her affections in a most wondherful way."

He was that worried about the parrot that he hardly lipped dhrink for two days; but the day before the Court sat I met him comin' down the road with the tall hat cocked well over his eye an' a bit of a lurch in his walk; and I knowed his mind was at ease again.

" The peace of the MacDermott household, Pat," sez he, bringin' up with a jerk, " is not goin' to be throubled this time."

" Ye think the parrot's safe, then ? " sez I.

" With the help of my friend Misther Rutherford," sez he, " I think I have made that noble and intelligent bird or fowl, as we say in the law, Pat, secure from the clutches of the executioner an' the dundherheadedness of my own counsellor."

An' the divil a word more information could I get out of him. But I knowed it would be all right; for dhrunk or sober it was very hard to get the betther of the Masther when he laid his mind to a thing.

The next mornin' the court was fillin' long before breakfast-time; an' by the time Major Donaldson took his seat on the Bench half the population of Ballygullion was sittin' an' standin' an' hangin' on to walls inside, an' the other half had been threw down the stairs by the police.

The sergeant was conductin' his own case, an' swore lamentable again the parrot. Accordin' to his story, the language of it would ha' scunnered a tinker. The whole town was scandalized, by the sergeant's way of it. Deputations from parents was blockin' the barrack doors every hour of the day; young people of both sexes was bein' corrupted wholesale; an' it was near as bad with them that was grown up. The bad ones was gettin' worse an' the good ones was leavin' the town; an' if the parrot wasn't hanged an' the Masther transported the very name of religion and virtue was dead in Ballygullion.

The Masther had come intil the court purty fresh, I knowed, by the thump he sat down on the seat with; an' with Misther Anthony houldin' him by the back of the coat he had no chance to get in his oar till the sergeant had done. But when Misther Anthony got on his feet I seen the Masther shakin' himself together, an' I knowed there'd be a duet of it.

" Ye say, sir," sez Misther Anthony to the sergeant, " that the night this bird perched on the barracks it used profane language ? "

" The expressions of it," sez the sergeant, " was somethin' horrid."

" That comes of lettin' a lawyer into my house," sez the Masther to himself. " I'm not half particular enough about the company I keep."

Misther Anthony took a very wicked look back at the Masther an' the crowd titthered.

" What were the expressions ? " sez Misther Anthony. " Were they directed against any particular person ? "

" Not that I heard," sez the sergeant. " It was just a kind of general blasphemiousness."

" That's you down to the ground, Anthony,"



sez the Masther. "Ye just curse a ring round ye clean blue. I doubt the bird has been associatin' with you unbeknownst to me."

The sweat broke on wee Misther Anthony's forehead; for he never knowed the minit the Masther would let out who taught the parrot. But he fetched a powerful welt at the Masther's shins with the toe of his boot an' started again when the laugh had died down.

"Is this a personal matther between you an' the parrot, sergeant?" sez he.

"I don't know what ye mean," sez the sergeant, very flustered.

"Did the parrot in these alleged blasphemous remarks say anything about you?" sez Misther Anthony. "Did it mention your name, for example?"

It was an ugly one for the sergeant, with the sun just dazzlin' on his nose that very minit; an' everybody leaned forward.

"I couldn't swear to all the bird put out of it that night," sez he at the last.

"Come, sir," sez Misther Anthony, "what colour did it say your nose was? Did it say it was red?"

"I won't repeat all the offensive expressions the bird was coached up in," sez the sergeant, lookin' very mad at the spectators that was grinnin' all over the court.

"If the parrot said your nose was red, would it be the truth?" sez Misther Anthony.

"It might not," sez the Masther. "Of a frosty night I've observed that the man's proboscis turns blue."

"Order, order!" sez Major Donaldson, when the roar had died down. "You must restrain your client, Mr. Anthony. The witness must be protected."

"In troth, your Worship," sez the Masther, "by the look the prosecutor is takin' at me, I'm thinkin' it's meself will need the protection."

An' 'deed, if the sergeant's look could ha' killed at ten feet, the Masther's last glass of whisky was dhrunk.

"Ye may go down, sir," sez Misther Anthony to the sergeant. "Your Worship," he goes on, "the spite and malice of the prosecutor are quite apparent. There is not one word of evidence to connect my client with the alleged blasphemous utterances of this wonderful bird."

"Divil a word," sez the Masther.

"But I'll show you," sez Misther Anthony, hurryin' on, "that the bird itself has been abominably libelled in this court. I will prove to you that it is incapable of the expressions that have been falsely laid to its charge; an' that it is incapable of utterin' one syllable beyond the plain truth—the unpleasant truth, as the prosecutor will find. Call the parrot."

But all the disordher that had gone on was nothin' to what riz then. Ye couldn't have heard your ears wi' cheerin' an' laughin' an' imitatin' the parrot as it was put on the table. If they hadn't been anxious to hear what the parrot would say they'd been at it yet. An' just as there was a kind of ordher bein' got, wee Sonny Burke croaks out, "Very sad—very sad," just in the parrot's own voice, an' sets them all off again.

"We'll now hear the evidence of the bird itself, your Worship," sez Mr. Anthony, "an' let you see how it has been libelled."

"I object altogether, your Worship, to this irregular proceeding," sez the sergeant.

"I'm afraid, Mr. Anthony," sez the Major, "that we couldn't take the evidence of a bird."

"Why not, your Worship?" sez Misther Anthony; "why not?"

"Well, for one thing," sez the Major, lookin' as serious as he could, "I doubt it doesn't understand the nature of an oath."

"Divil a one betther," sez the Masther. "Sure it spent the first two years of its life with Sailor Sam Donaghy, that could curse in every language came out of the Ark."

"If your Worship," sez Misther Anthony, "would hear what it can say without just puttin' it on oath it might be sufficient."

"That's right, Misther Anthony," shouts one or two from the back. "Ask it what's the matter with the sergeant."

"Your Worship won't permit this tomfoolery," sez the sergeant when ordher was got again. "It's uttherly irregular an' ridiculous."

"I don't see that I can prevent it, sergeant," sez the Major; for he was no great friend of the sergeant's, an' just as keen to see him took down a bit as anybody was. "If it uses any improper expressions I'll have it desthroyed on the spot."

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'We'll risk that," sez Misther Anthony. "Come here, Polly," an' he opens the cage door.

"Easy, Misther Anthony," whispers the Masther; "keep it in the cage!"

"Nonsense," sez wee Misther Anthony; "sure the bird knows me as well as you do. Pretty Polly," sez he, takin' it on his finger an' bendin' down his face to it. "What's the matther with the sergeant?"

The bird never said a word, but just gives one squawk an' bones Misther Anthony's nose in its neb.

Ye should ha' been in that court-house. The crowd cheered an' whooped an' whistled an' laughed. The Major lay back on the Bench an' fair screeched. An' far above it all ye could hear the language of Misther Anthony.

The first grab he made at the parrot the tail feathers come away in his hand, it houldin' all the time like grim death to his nose; but the next hoult he got of it was by the neck, an' in another minit there was no need of an ordher for the desthruction of poor Polly.

An' all the sergeant had swore of the poor bird was nothin' to the funeral service Misther Anthony said over it. Then he took one kick at the cage that landed it in the gallery, an' run out of the court like a daft body.

"Clear the court," sez the Major, as soon as he was able to speak. "The case is dismissed. You'll need no ordher now, sergeant."

The Masther was just at his own gate when I caught up with him. But when I begun sympathizin' he cut me short.

"Tell me, Pat," sez he, "is that the sergeant comin' up this way, or is it that my eyes is dazzled with the thirst?"

I looked back, an' sure enough there was the sergeant steppin' up the road like a dancin'-masther, twirlin' the dead parrot in his hand an' headin' straight for the wee man's house.

"Come on in, Masther," sez I, "an' don't let him have the crow on ye."

"Keep him in crack for a minit, Pat," sez the Masther, "till I make some little preparation for receivin' him." An' he lurches inside.

"Good-day, Misther Murphy," sez the sergeant, very airy, as he come up. "This is a sad occasion for my dear friend the schoolmasther."

He stopped all at once, an' glared at somethin' above my head, with the two eyes near bulgin' out of him.

I looked round, an' there, shufflin' along the branch of a tree in the Masther's garden, was ould Polly, as fresh as a daisy.

When it seen the sergeant it let a squawk ye could ha' heard at the barracks.

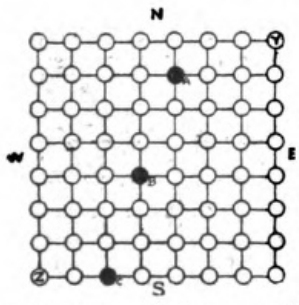
"Port your helm," it screeched; "port your helm! The sergeant's dhrunk. Look at his nose!"



"'PORT YOUR HELM!' SCREECHED POLLY. 'THE SERGEANT'S DHRUNK. LOOK AT HIS NOSE!'"

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PERPLEXITIES. By Henry E. Dudeney.



504.—A MOTOR-CAR JOURNEY.

THE circles are towns, and the lines connecting them are roads. A man wishes to make a journey from Y to Z, never going north or east. I have given in my "Amusements in Mathematics" a simple rule for discovering the number of different routes in all such cases. But a new difficulty here arises. There are severe epidemics raging in the three black towns, A, B, and C, and the gentleman will not pass through either of those towns. How many routes are there from which he can select? You see, if you deduct the number of routes from Y to C from the number of routes from Y to Z, you have properly subtracted all the routes to Z that pass through C. But if you then proceed to deduct the routes from Y to B in the same way, you will remember that some of these have already been included in the routes from Y to C, and must not be deducted twice. This is where your trouble begins. It requires a little clear thinking.

505.—THE SEVEN CHILDREN.

FOUR boys and three girls are seated in a row at random. What are the chances that the two children at the ends of the row will be girls?

506.—A CHARADE.

A CORRESPONDENT says that the following was handed to him by one of our suffragan bishops. It is curious what an attraction these word puzzles have for ecclesiastical minds. We have seen that some of our best enigmas have been composed by bishops.

Through my *first* for ever flow
Peals of laughter, cries of woe.
In my *second*, neatly made,
Thousands, night by night, are laid.
In my *whole* men never jest,
Vows are uttered, sins confessed.

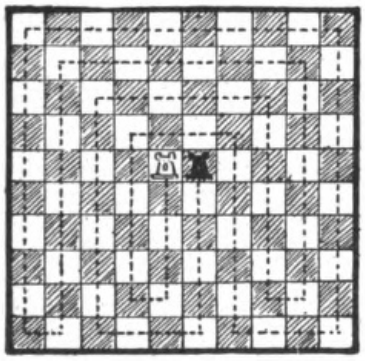
507.—A DAY'S SPORT.

A FRIEND had been out shooting birds and rabbits. I inquired what sport he had had, and his reply was a little curious: "Two score heads and eight dozen feet." How many birds and rabbits must he have shot?

508.—MENTAL ARITHMETIC.

I HAVE, from time to time, given various short cuts in mental arithmetic. Here is another example that will interest those who are unfamiliar with the process. Multiply 993 by 879 mentally in a few seconds.

Solutions to Last Month's Puzzles.



499.—A ROOK PUZZLE.

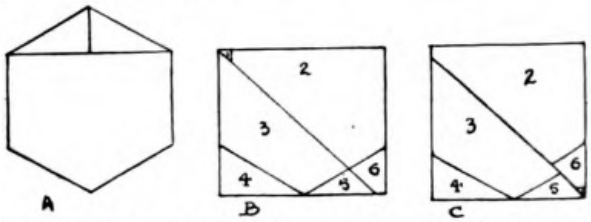
THE dotted line shows the solution. The White rook passes over every square of the enlarged board and captures the Black rook on the nineteenth move. This is the only solution possible, except its reflection.

500.—THE SEVEN APPLEWOMEN.

EACH woman sold her apples at seven for a penny and 3d. each for the odd ones over. Thus each received the same amount, 1s. 8d. Without questioning the ingenuity of the thing, I have always thought the solution unsatisfactory, because really indeterminate, even if we admit that such an eccentric way of selling may be fairly termed a "price." It would seem just as fair if they sold them at different rates and afterwards divided the money; or sold at a single rate with different discounts allowed; or sold different kinds of eggs at different values; or sold the same rate per basketful; or sold by weight, the eggs being of different sizes; or sold at rates diminishing with the age of the eggs; and so on. That is why I have never held a high opinion of this old puzzle.

501.—HEXAGON TO SQUARE.

IF you cut as in figure A, the three pieces will form a rectangle, as in figure B. We have already shown that such a rectangle can be cut in three pieces to form a square, as in figure C. But the cuts already made in the rectangle will necessarily raise the number of pieces to six.



502.—LETTER PAIRS.

TWO eight-letter English words in which every letter is repeated are STEPPEST and REAPPEAR. I have not at present found any longer word with this peculiarity, but think it probable that such words exist.

503.—CURRENT COINAGE.

THE illustration shows a solution. Only one coin, the farthing, is repeated, and in both directions the sum is £1 2s. 7½d.

		10s.		
		5s.		
£1.	2s.	1d	6d.	½d.
		4s.		
		2s 6d		
		1s.		
		¼d.		
		¼d.		

493.—SNUFFING DOING.

ELEVEN correspondents have sent me a suggested, and practically identical, answer to this puzzle. Divide 34,342,200 by two and we have 17,171,100, which figures will form one pair of snuffers for each son. I give three ways of forming the snuffers with the figures. The answer is rather feeble, but I am convinced that it is the one intended. No other suggestion received has been at all convincing.



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HE FLOWER-SHOW": THE STORY AWARDED FIRST PLA

A. CONAN DOYLE & H. G. WELLS

IN GREAT STORY COMPETITION

The Habit that seconds Nature —

FRY'S COCOA

See Page 22

THE STRAND MAGAZINE



ANOTHER SPLENDID "ARCHIE" STORY BY P. G. WODEHOUSE

June, 1920.

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THE STRAND MAGAZINE

June, 1920

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"NEKKAN STRUGGLED FIERCELY IN THE GRIP OF HIS ENEMY'S LONG ARMS. HE FLASHED HIS DAGGER FROM ITS SHEATH AND STRUCK AT BALASTOOR"

(See page 511.)

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The FLOWER-SHOW AT KWALIZ

By HERBERT TREMAINE

ILLUSTRATED BY RENÉ BULL

The following story won the Second Prize of £100 in our recent Short Story Competition, and two of the six judges—Sir A. Conan Doyle and Mr. H. G. Wells—gave it first place on their lists. Sir A. Conan Doyle's comment was: "A very beautiful and original story"; while Mr. H. G. Wells said: "'The Flower-Show at Kwaliz' has real imagination."

THE flower-show was held on the twelfth day of the month in the market-square of the city of Kwaliz. The Princess, a woman deeply learned in floriculture, came down from her palace on the Fourth Terrace to act as judge; and the first prize—a bag of gold and ten acres of land—was awarded to Balastoor, the son of Theimo.

On the evening of the same day, when the people were feasting and dancing in the square, a little man, leading a mule, came into the city by the Western Gate. The mule was laden with packages which seemed to be precious rather than heavy; for, when they swung, jostling, against the brass pillar at one side of the gate, the little man's hands went fluttering out in a swift, protective gesture.

"Flower-seeds and cuttings?" the young gatekeeper asked, grinning. The grin was a mocking and unfriendly one, and a wash of red surged up under the jaded, dust-gritted skin of the little man's face. He nodded and passed through the gate.

"But you will win no prizes this time!" the gatekeeper shouted after him as the big brass gates closed with a boom. "You are too late this time, Nekkan!"

The tired little man started and swung round, a question on his lips; but doubtless his pride made him think better of it and he went on, with the gatekeeper's derisive laugh ringing in his ears.

The city of Kwaliz was built in a basin-shaped hollow that made a big dimple in the middle of a circle of low-lying land. In the centre of the basin stood the market-place, surrounded by the public buildings—the baths, the court-houses, the prisons, and temples. On the sloping sides of the basin there were dwelling-houses, trees, and strips of flower-gardens, arranged in four great circular terraces, one above another. On the lowest terrace, called the First, the poorest citizens lived. On the highest were the palaces of the noblemen and the Princess. The gates of the city opened into the splendour of these; but the truth is that—owing to the peculiar natures of the building materials which were most plentiful in that district—there were no houses in Kwaliz that did not look magnificent. Leading his mule down the street of steps that led from the Fourth Terrace to the First, Nekkan saw on either side of him, rising above the masses of blossoming trees and still gilded here and there by the yellow glow of sunset, walls and towers and casements that gleamed with the pallor of marble and alabaster, and shot out, from their incrustations of gems, the yellow and scarlet, the violet and blue fires of

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bloodstone and amethyst and sapphire. The steps of the street were paved with porphyry, and the lamps were of gold and silver. In Kwaliz nothing was precious except rare flowers. Flowers made all the business of the city and of the great belt of rich land surrounding it. Millions of seeds and cut blooms and growing plants were every day exported; and the trained gardeners of Kwaliz were sought out by the kings of distant countries.

Nekkan lived on the First Terrace; but, on the Third, he suddenly paused and put his hand to his ear. His long journeying across the gritty desert had stopped up his ears and nostrils with dust; but he thought that he heard sounds of music and the stir of a big crowd. When he reached the Second Terrace he could no longer doubt. The market-place was full of revelry. If that son of evil, the gatekeeper, had spoken the truth and the flower-show had already taken place——!

The tired little man hurried down to the First Terrace, the mule's feet slipping on the porphyry flags. Looking down into the well of swinging lights and shadows and joyous sounds that was the market-square, Nekkan reeled, sick and faint with his disappointment. There had been a mistake, there had been a mistake—he repeated it to himself, piteously. Somehow the flower-show had been held that day though he had been told that it was to be held on the twentieth day of the month.

While the sick stupor produced by the shock lasted, Nekkan was the gentlest of tired little men. He unloaded his mule and, leading it through a passage of green marble to the stable, he fed and watered it and shook down a bed of long soft grasses with pink and purple blossoms. He himself hardly wished to eat or rest, and there was no one in the house to press him to do so; but, sitting on a carpet in his doorway, he gulped down three or four cupfuls of wine from one of the two tall crystal bottles that stood on a brass tray just inside the door.

Afterwards, in his pathetic attempt to excuse himself, Nekkan pleaded that he had made a mistake between the two wine-bottles; and, instead of refreshing himself with the mild white wine drunk daily in Kwaliz, had recklessly swallowed more than a pint of the *lenhi-foljar*—the "liquid fire" that was imported from foreign cities beyond the hills and beyond the sea.

Nekkan rose, with a head that swam a little, and went down the steps leading from the First Terrace into the deep market-place. Two or three of the revellers, seeing him, grinned unkindly; others called out condolences on his late arrival. Nekkan replied to looks and speeches with only his odd characteristic little nods of the head; and continued to push his way towards the decorated canopy which he could see over the heads of the people. It was the custom in Kwaliz that, on the evening of the day of the flower-show, the first-prize-winner should sit under this canopy and receive not only the congratulations of his friends, but visits from the leading men of the city.

A touch fell on Nekkan's arm, and he paused, looking into the face of a mild-eyed young man who, like most of the revellers, wore bright-coloured garments and a big flower in his white turban.

"You have had a long journey, Nekkan," the young man said. "Was it worth while?"

The friendly smile, the tactful avoidance of the subject of the flower-show, were comforting to the tired little man. He brightened.

"Worth while?" he said. "Truly it was worth while. I have brought back a marvel, Yenan—a plant the like of which has never been seen nor heard of. But——" and Nekkan fell back into despondency—"it is too late."

"Too late for what?" the other said, gently rallying him. "Too late for the annual flower-show of Kwaliz? A year will soon pass, Nekkan. It is an eternity to a child—not to a man of your age and learning."

"I may be dead before a year has passed," Nekkan answered, sombrely. "It is not merely the loss of the prize that distresses me—though I feel that the gold and the ten acres of land are mine by right. It is this, Yenan: that the foolish laws of the flower-show and of Kwaliz forbid me the right to appeal, before another year has passed, for even a piece of earth in which I can plant my treasure."

At this revolutionary criticism of the rigid laws of the city, Yenan glanced nervously around, fearful lest the words might have been overheard.

"A piece of earth, Nekkan!" he said, good-naturedly trying to soothe his companion. "But you have your two acres outside the gates; and although they are full of beautiful things—who has not heard of Nekkan's flowers and fruits?—you can surely find a little corner for your new wonder?"

"'A little corner'—aye, that's just it!" Nekkan cried, with a frantic gesture. "It is not a little corner that it needs, nor an acre, nor five acres!"

The young man's mild eyes rounded in amazement and curiosity.

"In the name of all wonderful things, Nekkan! What kind of plant is it and how have you carried it home? Is it a great cedar?"

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"'You will win no prizes this time!' the gatekeeper shouted. 'You are too late, Nekkan!'"

"Do not ask me questions about it," Nekkan said, with a touch of the specialist's jealous distrust. He had been cheated so often, poor fellow: his seeds had been stolen, his secret manures had been dug up and analysed: he had been jeered at and maligned by rivals. At least, Nekkan felt sure that all these things had been done. It seemed to him that they formed the only possible explanation of his repeated failure to carry off the first prize.

"So be it. I will ask you nothing," Yenan replied, with a smile. "But it surprises me," he added, "that a man who has travelled so far and brought back so amazing a plant should be disturbed by such things as the winning or losing of a prize or a year's wait for success."

"I have waited so many years, Yenan!" the other said, piteously. "And I have been cheated—I have been wronged. It is true that I have been to far-distant countries; but all my life is in Kwaliz. It is by the praise of Kwaliz or the contempt of Kwaliz that I live or die."

It was true. This curious little man was of so narrow a mind that he took no interest in any people beyond the belt of gardens that surrounded Kwaliz. His soul, intensively cultured like his garden, had become a seed-plot for rivalries, suspicions, and grievances.

Yenan shrugged.

"Kwaliz is indeed a fair city," he said, looking up to the terraces and towers which were beginning to be eyed with coloured lights. "But even Kwaliz may perish one day. Perhaps," he went on, smiling, "when Kwaliz is in ruins your marvellous seeds will be a great forest."

"Who said that I brought home seeds?" Nekkan whispered; but, overcome by his

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own enthusiasm and the honesty of Yenan's gaze, he went on, clutching at the young man's arm—

"It must have a large piece of ground. Then it can be controlled, then it will spread horizontally, growing almost under the earth, only the little tufts that bear the flowers showing above. Then it will bear great edible bulbs under the clay, and they will absorb its force, they will keep it stretched out like a great carpet with weights upon it. If it does not find a great flat piece of soft soil, if it falls among rocks, for example, it will become impatient, it will grow upwards instead of horizontally. And that is a terrible misfortune. For one thing, the rapid growth exhausts its strength: it flowers, but the seeds are starved, they will not mature. That is a great loss to a gardener. But there is more than that. Without the earth over it—especially if the sun touches the ripe seeds—it is a danger—a danger——"

Nekkan broke off as if scared by his own garrulity; and, loosening his grasp on Yenan's arm, moved away, the mild-eyed young man staring after him as if doubtful of his sanity.

Nekkan reached the place where the canopy stood. Seated on a carpet under it, and surrounded by a small ring of dignitaries, was a tall man, red-bearded, dressed in green and crowned with flowers. It was Balastoor, the son of Theimo; and a half-year before, when Nekkan had been about to start on his journey, Balastoor had told him that the flower-show was to be held on the twentieth day of the sixth month.

Nekkan's heart was gnawed by regret for those seven days of rest that he had granted to himself when the shining city of Kwaliz was almost in sight. Nekkan's brain was on fire with fury at the understanding of Balastoor's treachery.

An error? No; Nekkan knew that Balastoor would *say* that it had been an error; that Balastoor would laugh, sneer, patronize, as he had always laughed, sneered, patronized. Nekkan cursed his own simplicity in having accepted the liar's word when Balastoor came running after him as he rode out at the Western Gate. Running and panting, with a great display of generous eagerness to let Nekkan know that the date of the flower-show had been postponed!

Nekkan went to a drinking-booth where he bought some of the mild white wine and some food. He sat down, eating and drinking carelessly, his mind working like a wheel. He argued with himself, using the reasonable speech of Yenan. Time enough; a year would soon pass. On the day of the annual flower-show those citizens of Kwaliz who had acquired reputations as gardeners were permitted to make appeal for pieces of land for special purposes. As Nekkan had said to Yenan, the laws were stringent, no appeal not made on the proper day would be listened to; indeed, it was an offence against the laws to make such an appeal on any but that one day. As Nekkan had said, he had lost that chance; but, as Yenan had said, the chance would come again. A year would soon pass.

Why, long before then, the seeds might be stolen! Nekkan's hands clutched at his travel-soiled garments as he thought of his words to Yenan in that crowded market-place. Anyone might have overheard; and he was surrounded by the envious, the unscrupulous. At that moment even his house was perhaps being searched. A clever thief might think of looking in the stable behind the mule's litter——

Or he himself might die; his strength was not great. It was even probable that Balastoor, guessing that he had brought back something precious, might arrange to have him murdered. Balastoor was rich; yet he had always been envious of his poor rival.

The white wine was mild; but its little strength, uniting with the potency of the *lenhi-foljar* already drunk, worked madly in Nekkan's brain. The wheel in his head became a wheel of fire. He imagined, wildly, speeches that he would make to the crowd, telling his wrongs; appeals that he would make to the Princess and to the great men of Kwaliz. He saw himself confronting, denouncing Balastoor; snatching the crown of flowers from the handsome head, trampling it underfoot, tearing the honourable green mantle from the long limbs. It was part of Nekkan's wrong that Balastoor was a fine-looking man, and young. He had health and riches and the love of women; and yet he had stolen this poor Nekkan's prize.

NEKKAN rose and moved swayingly into the crowd, the people in the booth looking after him. The dancers were beginning to grow indifferent and groups of musicians were laying down their instruments. It was easier now to make one's way to the canopy where Balastoor still sat in the centre of the carpet, weary, smiling, polite; deprecating himself and all his people and all his doings to the two noblemen who had come down from the Fourth Terrace.

Nekkan stepped on to the carpet and bowed. As he lifted his head he thought he saw a look of amusement flutter across Balastoor's face as he responded to the salutation.

"Balastoor, son of evil," Nekkan said, "you are a liar and a thief."

The two noblemen scrambled to their feet; and Nekkan went on:—

"For years you have stolen from me and

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slandered me. You have hired outcasts from strange, unclean places to nip my plants and to put foul reptiles, slugs, and caterpillars on my land. When I was leaving the city by the Western Gate, six months ago, you ran after me, you son of falseness, to tell me that I could be absent on my journey another eight days. I believed you; and because my strength is no longer in its prime, I cherished the hope of an easier journey and rejoiced in this deed of kindness from a rival. Therefore you are the more deeply cursed for my faith. I will tear the crown from——"

Nekkan did not try to finish the sentence, for he saw that the two noblemen, coming out of the helplessness of their amazement, were giving orders to someone in the crowd. Leaping on his enemy, Nekkan grasped the flowery crown and with it (not without intention) a certain quantity of Balastoor's long soft red hair. Nekkan dashed down the wreath; but he could not carry out his intention of trampling upon it; because his feet were swung in the air as Balastoor closed with him.

Nekkan struggled fiercely in the grip of the long arms and rejoiced to hear the rending of the green silk mantle. But his breath was already spent and others had now rushed to Balastoor's aid. Kicking, wriggling, and clutching, Nekkan suddenly felt his fingers touch something hard. It was the sheathed dagger which he—like all citizens of Kwaliz when they went abroad—carried in the girdle of his travelling-dress.

The shape of the dagger was so familiar that Nekkan's action was almost instinctive. He flashed it from its sheath and struck at Balastoor. He heard a sudden great uproar from the people; and saw Balastoor, pale and terrified, shrink back, with blood squirting from a rent in the shoulder of the green robe.

He had always felt sure that Balastoor was a coward.

THEY tried Nekkan in the grey marble court-house, inlaid with peridot and silver.

Fortunately Balastoor had suffered only a flesh wound and a shock; but there were special circumstances which rendered Nekkan's crime as grave as if it had been the murder of Balastoor on an ordinary day. By the law of Kwaliz the prize-winner on the day of the flower-show ranked as a nobleman until midnight; he bore the title "Suffi Shenna" ("Lord of the Gardens") and his person was, not exactly sacred, but highly respected. Nekkan was therefore guilty of having shed the blood of a nobleman and also—which was considered quite as bad—of having spoken to him in a quite improper way.

Nekkan might, therefore, have been condemned to death. But he was known to be an ardent and not unsuccessful cultivator and the winner of several consolation prizes. Moreover, Yenan, whose father was an important seed exporter, appeared in court, and, giving Nekkan a better character than he really possessed, pleaded earnestly that the great, if imaginary, provocation that he had received might be considered. Balastoor, bandaged and with tears in his eyes, swore that he had never injured Nekkan in thought, word, or deed; but admitted that the little man had had delusions concerning him. The mistake about the date of the flower-show had been due, Balastoor thought, to Nekkan's hardness of hearing. Nekkan was saved from the death penalty and condemned to perpetual banishment from the city. He was to leave at dawn on the following morning.

Though moved by Yenan's kindness, Nekkan thought that the young man's interference had made a bad matter worse. Nekkan's feeling was that he did not want to live outside of Kwaliz, that there was nothing to live for outside of Kwaliz! It did not enter his parochial little mind that his skill in gardening might win him a welcome in some foreign country; nor did he desire to astonish strange peoples with the wonder that he had brought back to his own city. He considered himself lost, his life over, his name henceforth a byword. While sentence was being pronounced a terrible look of rage was in his face; but he bowed before the judge and—in the softest and humblest of voices—made his appeal for the one favour which the law of Kwaliz granted to all condemned to banishment or death.

The judge replied formally that Nekkan was free to make his appeal.

"I should like," Nekkan said, meekly, "to ride on my mule, before dawn, through Kwaliz."

The request seemed touching to many present. It was granted; and Nekkan—in accordance with the dignified and humane custom of the city—was let go free till the following dawn; when he would be expected to meet the authorities at the Northern Gate and ride forth from Kwaliz.

IN the very early morning Nekkan, seated on his grey mule, began his farewell progress.

On one of the mule's flanks a skin of wine and water was hung, on the other a great square bag of plaited straw. When Nekkan left his own home in the First Terrace, and rode down into the market-place, the sky was still purple and velvety, punctured with great stars. But before he had ridden round the Fourth Terrace, the buildings were taking on hues of opal and pearl from the faintly changing eastern sky.

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The Flower-Show at Kwaliz



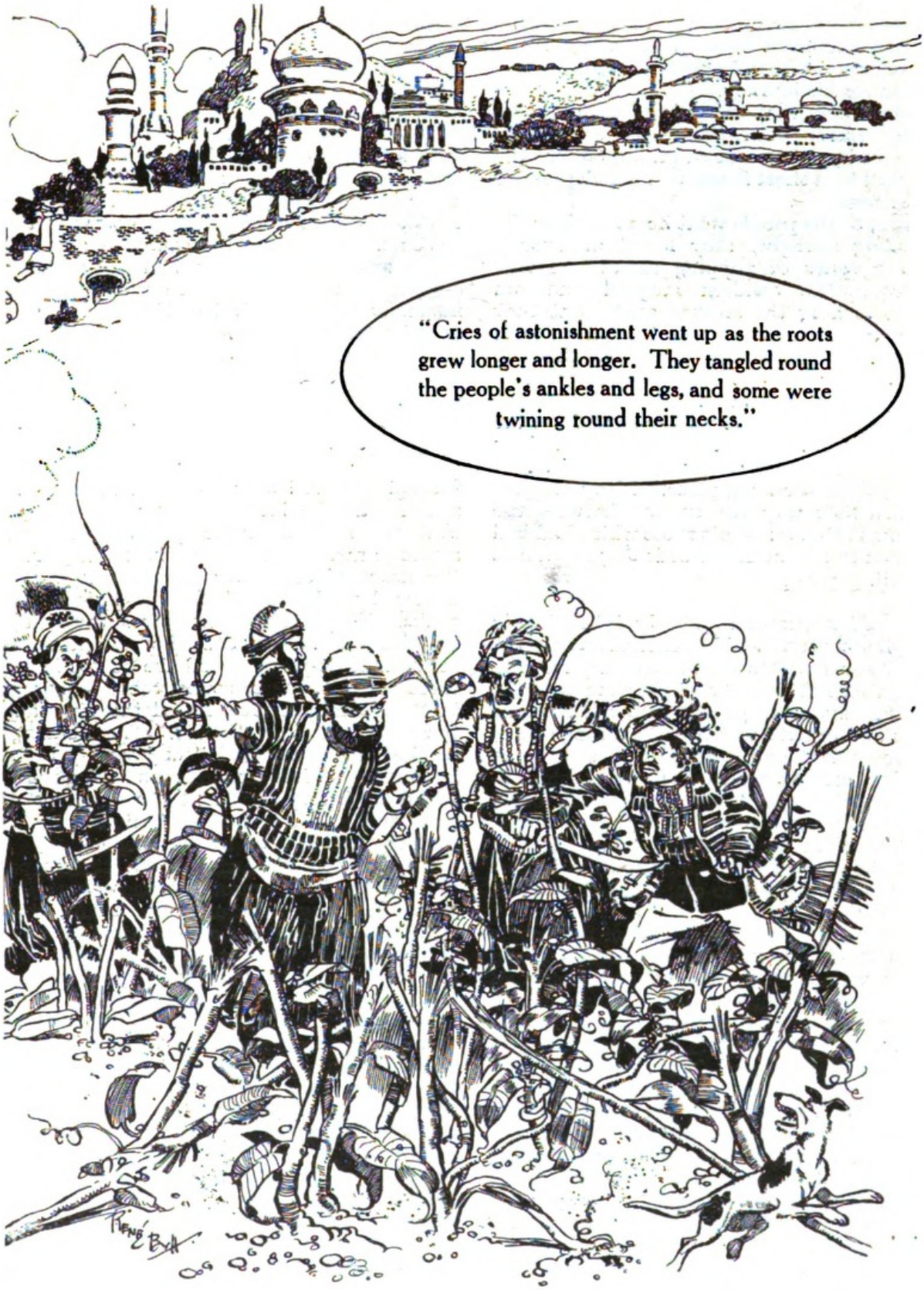
A number of people had risen to see Nekkan ride. They watched him silently, without hostility or disdain, for his fate had made him a dignified figure. These sensation-mongers were mostly men, but there were women and children among them. It was a quick-eyed little girl who first noticed that there was a hole in one corner of the straw-plaited bag, and that light, roundish objects, of about the size of dates, were slowly dropping through the hole and falling on the streets. The early morning wind caused some of these to roll into the gutters or into the flower-beds bordering the pavements. The child's mother ventured to call Nekkan's attention to this accident.

"Your food will all be lost, Nekkan," she said; and, stooping, picked up one of the dry, husky bodies which were of a bean-like shape, whity-brown and wrinkled like the hands of a very old man.

"It does not matter," Nekkan said, and rode on. A few of the people grinned in an awkward attempt to relieve the melancholy of the occasion; but the smiles died away for lack of popular encouragement.

In the glory of a golden dawn, Nekkan—followed at a little distance by the swiftly-swelling crowd—came to the Northern Gate. It was a stern structure of iron; and its two great enwrought leaves stood open, showing the pale expanse of the desert; for the belt of gardens ceased at a distance of half a mile on either side of this gate. Three noblemen on white mules and a contingent of police were waiting to receive him. He passed through the gateway and the iron leaves closed behind him with a clang; then,

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"Cries of astonishment went up as the roots grew longer and longer. They tangled round the people's ankles and legs, and some were twining round their necks."

casting one glance over his shoulder, he galloped out into the desert.

A sigh, compounded of awe, pity, and sensational enjoyment, rose from the crowd. As long as they could see the little cloud of dust kicked up by the mule's heels, they remained gazing through the gates. Then they slowly disbanded, the curious among

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them picking up the things which had dropped from the straw bag and wondering, as they examined them, what strange sort of food was this that Nekkan had so carelessly packed for his journey.

They found that the objects were easy to crack. Inside each there was a pinkish-white body, juicy, with a strong odour, and attached by a short filament to the depression in the bean.

Then, as the people went homewards in the spreading sunlight, they heard all around them a series of popping noises like tiny air-guns. The children laughed and ran about, seeking the strange seeds that they might tread on them; but the elder people noticed, with interest and wonder, that the bean-like bodies were of themselves cracking and splitting open in the light. A moment later short white roots were darting from the pinkish bodies inside the beans; and these roots quickly grew longer and waved about as if seeking a resting-place. Many of them wormed their way into crevices between the pavement stones; while those which had had the luck to fall on flower-beds dug down into the soil.

THAT a people so keenly interested in floriculture should be excited and pleased by such a phenomenon was only natural. The citizens of Kwaliz thought no more of the banished man; in groups they fell on their knees and eagerly watched the strange seeds as they rolled and cracked and shot forth swaying, seeking suckers. Cries of astonishment went up as those roots which could not readily find a morsel of soil grew longer and longer in their search; even climbing up to the flower-laden balconies and window-boxes of the houses to embed themselves in the clay.

It was then that the delight of the people began to change into fear. Children began to cry, women to scream, men to shout and run for their knives. For the streets of Kwaliz and its market-place were already a mass of pinky-white roots, growing momently stouter and stronger. They tangled round the people's ankles and legs, round the pasterns of the mules of the water-carriers. A herd of cattle, driven in from the country, stampeded, frightened by the pale vegetable serpents that climbed up their legs and tails; a stall of tin-ware fell down with a clatter and dazzle as the beasts charged to and fro in the square.

Some of the roots were twining round people's necks. A cry went up that a child had been strangled, and there were frantic rushes for the houses.

Then clusters of leaves began to dart from the roots; and from the middle of each cluster there bounded a great muscular, jointed branch. As the branches grew—feebly warred against by the knives and daggers of the people—a new cluster of leaves broke forth at each joint with a swish, like the unfurling of a fan. Men threw down their knives and fetched their heaviest gardening tools—hoes, forks, shears, sickles. Blacksmiths ran for their hammers. But the muscular branches, though bruised and bleeding, wrapped themselves about the tools and about the limbs and bodies of the wielders. There was the sound of cracking ribs; and all those who had escaped the creeper's grasp climbed and struggled to the houses and, rushing inside, bolted the doors and shuttered the windows.

Even through the walls they could hear the growth of the creeper; and those who ventured to peep through the slats of the shutters saw that the branches were as thick as great tree-trunks. Every now and then came the swish of a new fan of leaves unfurling. Those leaves increased in size and stiffness as the branches grew stouter; so that the swishing noise gradually became a sort of rattling, harsh and horrible. From the heart of each new cluster a new and higher branch darted like a big-muscled snake. They folded themselves round the buildings—round the court-houses and baths in the market-place, round the houses in the three lower terraces, round the tall palaces in the Fourth Terrace, round the walls and the metal gates of Kwaliz. The buildings cracked in those awful embraces as the human frames had cracked; and the gushing sound of falling dust and the tinklings of glass and gold and iron and silver mingled with the wail sent up by the people.

At noon, in a blaze of sunshine, the creeper was waving its topmost branches above the city. Feathery tufts of green fronds came out, beautiful and soft against the blue sky; and from the centres of these tufts big flowers burst forth, glowing red and orange, exultantly opening their bosoms to the heat.

At sunset the flowers suddenly wrinkled and shrank round anæmic bean-shaped seed-cases. Then the leaves withered; and, laden with their brown clusters, the great branches, flabby and palsied, relaxed their grip and fell down, bringing with them the stones of Kwaliz. Next morning the giant creeper lay, looking like a heap of dirty leather harness, in a mass of crumbled marble and agate, porphyry and alabaster, sparkling with the dust of gold and silver and many-coloured gems. The dead were all hidden in these lovely ruins of the loveliest of cities.

A TIRED little man, leading a grey mule, entered the gate of the town of Lurooula, many miles north of Kwaliz.

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SOME PLAYHOUSE MOMENTS

By

A. B. WALKLEY

IS an actor only what Johnson said he was, a fellow who claps a hump on his back and calls himself Richard III., or is he not rather a creative artist, collaborating with the playwright, whose imaginary personage he enriches with his own imagination and endows with his own life? Collaborator may seem at first sight too proud a title for a man whose primary business, beyond doubt, is to be a faithful interpreter of what another man has conceived and set down in words. But to say that is only to assign a limit. Obviously, the actor must not go outside his part and so play somebody else. Obviously, he must live inside his part a life coloured by the other man's imagination and guided by it at every turn. These are the restrictions, but what the world calls restrictions are to the artist opportunities. His own imagination, his own temperament, his own physical being, these are what he works with, and no two actors ever rendered the same part in the same way. Indeed, to speak rigorously, no one actor ever did. For art is a function of individuality, and a fixed individuality would be not life but death. Edmund Kean, according to Hazlitt, was never the same two nights running. Most actors are at their worst on first nights. If one only knew when to catch them at their best!—but, unfortunately, newspapers can't wait. At his best or at his worst, however, the actor's individuality is what chiefly matters. Technical skill is a subsidiary thing; indispensable of course, as in all the arts, but indispensable only to enable the actor to be himself without let or hindrance, to give his individuality free play. More than ever is this true today. The art of the theatre tends to become more and more the art of the individual. The part becomes greater than the whole. For proof, see any *revue*. A rich temperament, brought to its full power by perfect technique, in complete possession of its resources, dominating its public by natural gift of high imagination or drollery or wit, or astonishing it by impeccable accomplishment—that is what the modern playgoer is "out for."

AND it is this personal element—call it temperament, personality, individuality, what you will—that inevitably recurs to the mind when one casts one's memory back. One remembers this or that face, or voice, or gesture, or demeanour, rather than this or that play. I say this not without a tinge of vexation, for I have been vainly trying to remember a play called (ironically enough in my case) "Forget-me-not." What was its precious plot? What was the blest name of its heroine? No doubt there are plenty of reference books that would tell me, but reference books are among the *biblia a-biblia* that I cannot abide. The truth is, it is "easy and even helpful" to forget plots. The excellent Aristotle, I know, laid it down that plot was the most important thing in drama and "as it were, the very soul of it," and if you think of such a thing as the "Œdipus Tyrannus"

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you can see what he means. But Sophocles wrote a long time ago and, as Molière observed, ' we are the people of to-day," people who like a lively plot to follow at the time and easy to forget afterwards.

WHO remembers Shakespeare's comedy-plots? He hardly seemed to remember them himself, picking them up more or less ready-made and dropping them abruptly at the end, as though they rather bored him. Who remembers Congreve's plots? They were most of them farragos of childish absurdity. Anyhow, I cannot remember the plot of "Forget-me-not," though I am still thrilled with pleasure at the recollection of Miss Genevieve Ward's acting, or bits of it, in that play. She was a magnificent, authoritative adventuress (I suppose) who had got some wretched man in her clutches, and I remember her crushing him with some article in the French code. She read the text distinctly and gave the number of the article—nothing more. But I can see her doing it now and hear her resonant tones and clear-cut articulation, syllable by syllable like the stroke of hammer on anvil, and feel the weight of her intellectual contempt. Then there came a sudden change of fortune—what pedants used to call a peripety. She learnt that some deadly enemy was on her track (was it a member of some secret society she had betrayed?) and lo! the towering triumphant woman of the moment before was turned into a creature of abject terror, cowering, struck dumb, shaking in every limb. I dare say the play was no literary masterpiece, but probably what is called an "actor's play," written for showy, striking situations such as these. But with Miss Ward their force was tremendous. The sight and sound of her haunted me then and, as I have said, haunt me still. That is what acting of the right quality can do for you—and do for you best, perhaps, in plays by no means the best in themselves. It can set your pulse throbbing and your heart beating fast, and at the same time give you an intellectual satisfaction in watching an artistic aim unerringly achieved. Hazlitt said that the Indian jugglers delighted him more than the best acting because their performance had a mathematical exactness of success which was impossible in the other case. But acting may have these moments of perfection, too. Miss Ward's acting in the two moments which I have mentioned was as convincing as anything in Euclid.

MISS WARD is happily still with us, and even the youngest playgoers know what a "value" she was at the St. James's in the later stage of the Alexander management. She illustrates what I have been saying about the importance of personality. Her technique is sound and finished. But to say that is only to say that she has her artistic means under thorough control, and acts with her critical consciousness fully alert: in other words, that she knows what she is doing. These, however, are but ancillary virtues. The force of her acting is in her personality, in her manifestly intellectual temperament, in her emphatic expression of will, in the breadth and liberality of her style. Ah! that sense of style! It has almost vanished from the stage. Mrs. Kendal had it, and Ellen Terry, whenever the generally irrepressible "child of nature" in her could be kept in order, and her sister Marion, too, and Sir Squire Bancroft, as he showed us in Triplet only the other day. But it is a classic quality, and we are all romantics now.

AND certainly—if the essence of the classic is form and of the romantic, as Pater declared, strangeness with beauty—there is no difficulty in placing Mrs. Patrick Campbell. She is beautifully strange in "Pygmalion," and she was beautifully strange in "Mrs. Tanqueray." An actress of temperament if ever there was one—the richest, most passionate, most capricious of temperaments—she was the very woman for the Pinero play. I had seen her at the Adelphi in some absurd Cromwell piece, which was contemporaneous with the song, "When you want to know the time, ask a pleeceman"—for I remember quoting it when commenting on a scene wherein the Protector asked his Captain of the Guard "what hour is't?" I had seen her and I had confidently expected her speedy promotion to a higher level of dramatic art. Well, she found her opportunity in the creation of Mrs. Tanqueray—creation, I say, for she filled out the dramatist's imaginary personage with her own life and warmth, lifted it from the printed page into flesh-and-blood reality and stamped on it her own image and superscription. No mere histrionic talent could have sufficed to realize Mrs. Tanqueray. Nor genius, even. That was plain enough when an actress of genius, Eleonora Duse, tried the part. Duse did not realize Mrs. Tanqueray, she idealized her, gave her an orchidaceous splendour of style and a delicacy of nature that was far too fine for poor Paula. But Mrs. Campbell was the very woman, with her undercurrent of vulgarity and of nostalgia for the old courtesan life still felt and irking her beneath the surface of her new respectability. I still remember the beautiful impudency and gusto with which she brought out "I adore fruit, when it's

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SIR J. FORBES ROBERTSON AS HAMLET.

"MY MOST VIVID RECOLLECTION IS OF HIS SPEECH TO THE PLAYERS. WHAT A CHARMING THING THAT WAS!"

Photo. Lizzie Caswall Smith.

expensive." I still remember the voice of mockery—the true voice for the part; never the voice of a fine lady, but the full-throated voice, with a suspicion of hysteria in it, of the ex-demimondaine—with which she mimicked the "good nights" of the quiet, orthodox household. Talent, as much as you please, and of course a high intelligence; but these, indispensable as they were, and always are, were not the secret of her achievement. That secret was the rich, passionate temperament. Here was a magnificent animal, fascinating enough to marry even out of the gutter, violent, hateful, but (like the expensive fruit) adorable. She gave you a thrill of excitement, a "crowded hour of glorious life." What better thing (outside poetic tragedy, which is dead, or sleepeth) has the theatre to offer?

I HAVE mentioned poetic tragedy. After all, it *does*, now and then, arise from its bier, or its couch, to delight us, as the dead dancer rose in the recent Barrie-Karsavina "Truth about the Russian Dancers." I suppose, at any moment "Hamlet" is being played by somebody somewhere. You could not have a more signal instance of what I have been insisting on, the importance of temperament in art. For there are playwrights as well as players of temperament, and it is as plain as a pikestaff, to those who have eyes to see, that Shakespeare gave his temperament unusually free play in writing "Hamlet." He took up a "revenge" story, because it was popular, and, once he had taken it up, found it (so I guess) something of a nuisance. I guess that his main interest went out to his hero, not as an avenger, but as a projection of himself—as being and thinking what he, William Shakespeare, would naturally be and think, all ghosts and missions and family vengeance notwithstanding. By generations of actors this passed unperceived. The "melancholy Dane" became a depressing tradition. Garrick's Hamlet must have been a "holy terror." "Would you not, sir," asked Boswell, "start as Mr. Garrick does, if you saw a ghost?" Johnson answered, "I hope not. If I did, I should frighten the ghost." And just look at the picture of John Kemble handling Yorick's skull.

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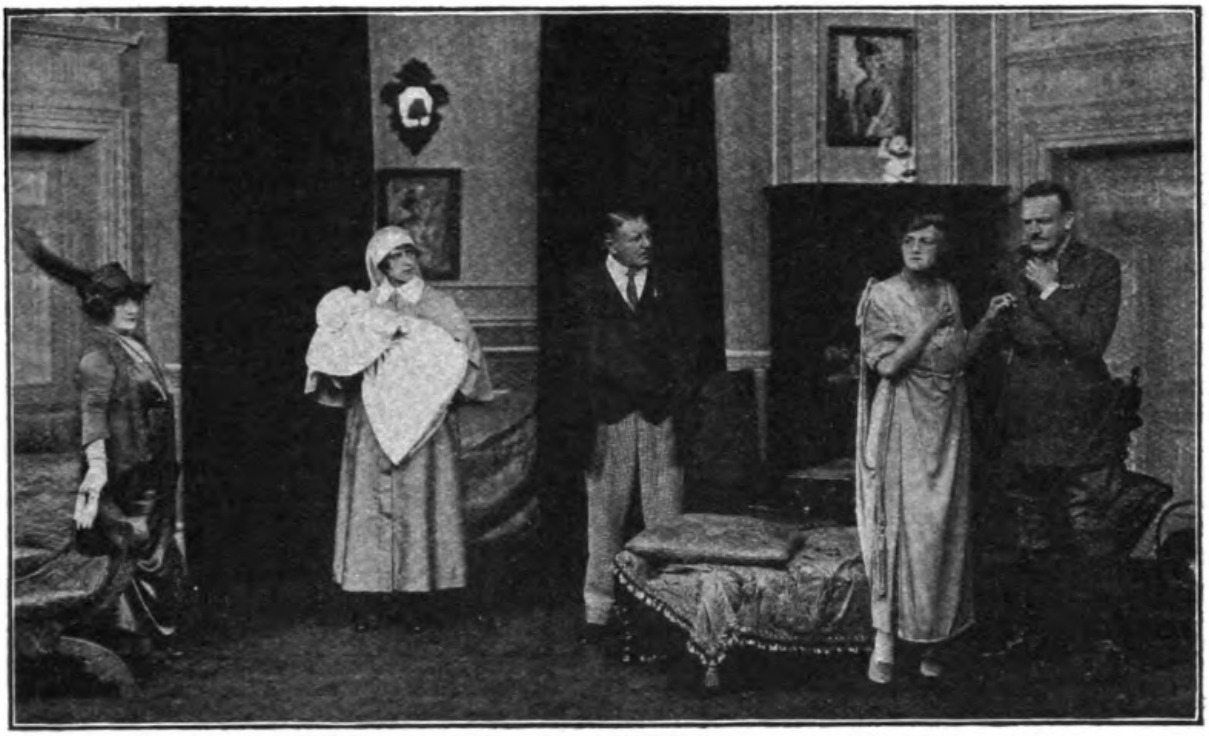
THE commentators were as blind. They spoke of Hamlet being crushed by his "mission." Why, he seizes every opportunity of putting it out of sight! Fresh from his interview with the ghost, when other men would be still dazed by the shock, he is told of the arrival of some strolling players. Does he say, "I am not in the mood for these trifles now, I can only attend to my great business of revenge"? Not a bit of it. His face lights up; his mind starts off at a tangent to the things of the theatre. He spouts one of the players' speeches. He gives them a lecture on the art of acting. That the players may be of use in his "revenge" business is a thought that only comes to him later and, as it were, by the way—when he has time to spare from the absorbing business of art. And so, when the players with their "mouse-trap" have helped him to corroborate the ghost's story, is he overwhelmed by the terrible truth, as a man full of naught but his "mission" would be? Not at all; what he at first shows is the joy of the scientific investigator whose experiment has "come off." The justiciary is lost in the successful detective. Follow Hamlet to the last act, and you still find him jumping at every chance of forgetting his "mission." If he meets a gravedigger, he must needs stop and "draw him out," measure wits with the fellow, let the flavour of his rustic philosophy melt on the tongue. Osric comes to invite him to a bout of fence with Laertes. He eagerly accepts. What is the "mission" of a lifetime to a stirring half hour with the foils? All this virtuosity and dilettantism of Hamlet, his keen interest in life as a game to play at and to think about, his courtesy and grace, his sympathy for all things human, his intense vitality, leave a cheerful, almost exhilarating and gay impression upon the mind, which goes far to mitigate the chill cast on it by the tragic gloom of the plot.

WHAT is the explanation of all this? Is it not that Shakespeare has poured into Hamlet his own lively, curious, hedonistic, characteristically Renaissance temperament? Yet every player I have seen, with one sole exception, has missed this essential side of Hamlet, the joyous, the sunny side. I have seen the sardonic Hamlet of the two Irvings, father and son, and the daring, *décolleté* Hamlet of Wilson Barrett and Mounet-Sully's Hamlet, as mad as a March hare, and Sarah Bernhardt's, a charming *demoiselle*, and the Werther-Hamlet of Beerbohm Tree and the athletic Bensonian Hamlet, who carried off the dead Polonius on his shoulders. I regret not to have seen the "steel-cage" Hamlet, once a favourite in the United States with audiences who were able to throw missiles at him, safe behind his bars, without interrupting the performance.

My one exception is the Hamlet of Mr. (as he then was) Forbes Robertson. I was pleased the other day to come across a record (November 30th, 1897) in Sir M. Grant Duff's "Notes from a Diary"—"Some of us went this evening to see 'Hamlet' at the Lyceum. . . . Mr. Forbes Robertson seemed to me the best Hamlet I have chanced to see." So he seemed to me. He left the gloom out, was really the "sweet" Prince, exhibited in his own temperament the very temperament that, if my guess is right, Shakespeare poured into the part. My most vivid recollection is of his speech to the players. What a charming thing that was! Ten or a dozen years afterwards, I again heard him deliver it (not in costume) to the company assembled on the stage at the opening of the New Theatre in New York—a trying ordeal, but again a happy success of amenity, grace, and charm.

AFTER all, however, the pleasantest associations of one's memory are with comedy and comic acting. Comic, I mean, as opposed to tragic; not mere buffoonery, though, for that matter, some of our buffoons to-day are artists of supreme quality. I would as soon speak disrespectfully of the Equator as of Mr. George Robey and Mr. Nelson Keys. They, too, are great examples of temperament. But in these cases it is temperament at large, temperament which is a law to itself, whereas I am considering the controlled and circumscribed temperament of the regular actor, temperament subject to the law and limitation of strictly representative art. As I began by saying, this limitation is the artist's opportunity. Among our comedians of to-day and yesterday I can think of none who so happily combines temperament with representation as Mr. Gerald du Maurier. He is always himself yet never out of his part. It is a self all nature and downright sincerity, so that he never seems to be acting his part but just unconcernedly living it. Seems, remember, for it is dangerously easy to have illusions about "nature" and to forget that there is an art that conceals art. But, art or nature or both combined, there was a piece of acting by Mr. du Maurier in "Dear Brutus" which counts for me as one of the happiest moments I have passed in the theatre. I mean the scene in the enchanted wood between a father, who is just an ordinary, jolly, girl-spoiling father, and his girl, who to his intense astonishment is just becoming a woman. It won't do

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MR. CHARLES HAWTREY IN "HOME AND BEAUTY."

"HIS PERFORMANCE AS THE HUSBAND WHO RETURNS FROM THE WARS TO FIND HIS WIFE WITH A SECOND HUSBAND AND A BABY WAS AS GOOD AS ANYTHING HE EVER DID."

Photo. Foulsham & Banfield.

to ignore the author. The scene, as written, was a characteristic bit of Barrie, with its tender sentiment shyly hiding between the lines of colloquial snip-snap. But it was the acting that gave it the last touch of the exquisite. In a scene coming home to the experience of most fathers, Mr. du Maurier was easily, naturally, what most fathers would like to be: outwardly simple, brusque, chaffing, inwardly adoring his girl, struck by the novelty of her womanliness, almost afraid of her with her hair "up." Mr. du Maurier, it seems to me, has always been at his happiest in Barrie plays. One's memory lingers on his young aristocrat in "Crichton," who was ducked in the bucket for every epigram, and on his policeman and Prince Charming in "A Kiss for Cinderella." The last part, a piece of extravagant mimicry and burlesque, revealed an entirely new and unexpected side of his talent. But realism is his great quality, that veracity in rendering freshly observed facts of life, which, in playwrights as well as players, is perhaps the most precious asset of the modern stage. Mr. du Maurier is the most natural, the most veracious of living comedians.

YET I am not sure I have not had more pleasant moments in the theatre with Mr. Charles Hawtrey. In number, certainly, if not in quality, for Mr. Hawtrey is an old theatrical hand. Here is another actor of temperament—I must still harp on that string. You simply cannot imagine Mr. Hawtrey sinking his identity in that of a fictitious personage. If some demon whispered to him to come before us disguised as Lear or Iago, we should all cry with one accord, "No, no, it won't do, we know your smile and your voice; take your hands out of your pockets and light a cigarette." The fictitious personages he does represent are but variants of himself, replicas or slight deformations of his own temperament. He appeals to us mainly, I think, because he realizes a favourite English type, the public school type—the well-groomed Englishman of the best manners, quietly gay, mundane, cynical, a "sport" and a "good fellow." Season with a dash of irresponsibility (because his characters seldom let him off that), and you have a very choice salad *à l'anglaise*. It is odd to think of the number of French farces in which this True-Born Englishman has been fated to appear, and how he has persistently anglicized their Gallic heroes so that their own mothers wouldn't know them. His repertory has consisted of so many parts all more or less of the same pattern that they form a kind of composite photograph in the memory, which it would be puzzling to split up into its components. But one scene stands out, a marvel of droll acting. It

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was in Mr. Carton's "Lord and Lady Algy," and Mr. Hawtrey, as the hero, had gone to a fancy-dress ball as the great Duke of Marlborough. He was supposed to have had a little too much champagne, and his picture of (modern) good manners hampered but not conquered by intoxication and the inconvenience of enormous Queen Anne boots and a periwig was an unforgettable thing. But his last performance, in "Home and Beauty," before his recent illness (we must all hope it won't have been his last, *tout court*), as the husband who, returning from the wars to find his wife with a second husband and a baby, and who takes it all with cheery humour, was as good as anything he ever did.



MR. SEYMOUR HICKS IN "SLEEPING PARTNERS."

"IN AN AGONY OF NERVOUS EXPECTATION AT THE TELEPHONE."

IT has been the virtue of Mr. Hawtrey, as I have said, to reproduce for our delight a type and a peculiarly national type, in the very art of remaining his individual self. Another comedian of temperament (once more!), Mr. Seymour Hicks, is, I think, less typical than individual. He has an un-English vivacity and an almost French polish. There is a merry devil in his eye and a perpetual twitch of fun at the corner of his mouth which by no means accord with our usual Britannic phlegm. In short, he is himself, a miracle of mental effervescence and high spirits, mischievous (in the benign sense) as Puck, M. Bergson's *élan vital* made flesh. And, in the right part, he can act his fellow-players' "heads off." He found the right part in "Sleeping Partners," an adaptation from Sacha Guitry and one of those plays that we English are apt hypocritically to call very French. No Englishman, of course, has ever made an assignation with his friend's wife and sat, like Mr. Hicks, in an agony of nervous expectation at the telephone, wondering whether she will come or whether she won't. I can still see Mr. Hicks at that telephone, a perfect picture of the anxious lover, punctuating passionate appeals to the lady with outbursts of spluttering rage over telephone interruptions and other obstacles to the smooth course of true if illicit love. But the whole performance was one explosion of energy. Mr. Hicks was never off the stage and always talking and out-talking, wheedling, entreating, triumphing. As I say, in the right part and the right mood, Mr. Hicks is an incomparable light comedian. He was going to play another thing of Sacha Guitry's, "Debureau," and it would, I guess, have been a choice experience to see him as Pierrot. But, lo! our tricksy Puck has suddenly startled the world with the announcement that he is going into politics! If so, he may safely be depended on to wake up the House of Commons. But why give up to party what was meant for mankind?

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THE LITTLE PRINCESS

By ROLAND PERTWEE

ILLUSTRATED BY W. SMITHSON BROADHEAD

"YVOLT," observed the King of Terra Nova, "I devoutly wish, my son, you would give up parting your hair so low over the ear. It is neither becoming nor, I venture to say, princely."

"As to that," returned the young man, with a shrug of the shoulders, "the last thing I desire to be is princely."

The King dropped his cigarette ash into a convenient bowl, his observance of small as well as of great responsibilities being a pattern to his subjects.

"I remark with regret that it is a fashion among Crown Princes of to-day to display the colours of Socialism and an unworthy disposition to escape the duties imposed upon them by birth and heritage."

"It is the duty of a prince——" began Yvolt.

"To be princely," continued the King, "as it is the duty of a coal-heaver to heave coal."

"For my part I had rather heave coal, then."

The King smiled. "I have a vivid recollection once of you attempting to do so in a mining district. The episode was illustrated in the daily Press, and I am bound to confess that neither your mother nor myself, laying aside the natural appreciation common to parents, thought you evidenced any particular skill at the exercise."

Prince Yvolt blushed. "I mean to imply that kings and princes are puppets, not individuals. Their comings and goings are ordered and controlled. They cannot even choose the houses they live in or the mates they live with. And why not—why not?"

"I am waiting for you to tell me," said the King, politely, "and when you have finished I will tell you."

"Look here, pater," said the boy, "let's talk to each other in a good old straightforward way instead of like a couple of dictionaries. I've got the blues, and that's what it amounts to."

"If my somewhat scholarly style oppresses you," replied the King, "let us by all means converse on more familiar lines. I may be rusty, but I will do my best. What's up?"

"I hate the rotten notion of these arranged marryings. I think they are bad—vicious—unnatural."

"On the face of it," said the King, "it does look pretty rotten; but——" he paused, stroked his chin thoughtfully, "but d'you know it isn't so at all. I am going to tell you something which the people, who know so much more of us than we know of ourselves, would be very loath to believe. It is just this. I am now and always have been head over ears in love with the Queen—your mother. Even had I been a private individual I could conceive of no one in whose company I would more readily have passed my days. This, of course, is between ourselves, for I have always been particular to avoid making myself ridiculous."

"That's all to the good, pater, but others may not be so lucky. Now my idea of love——"

"Is sure to have something morganatic about it."

"And why not?"

"There is no greater mistake than the assumption that love is only accessible where it is inaccessible. You might as well argue that a man has never reached the summit of Mont Blanc because he made the ascent by the funicular instead of on foot."

The Crown Prince's eyes seemed to settle on a far horizon, and presently he replied:—

"I wanted to live my own life, dad."

"I know," said the King, gently, "and that's what you'll do, my dear boy; your life—and no one else's. You know, Yvolt," he added, "I'm very fond of you—very"; then, a shade embarrassed by his own feelings, "but I do wish you wouldn't part your hair so low over the ear."

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"You're a good sort, dad—but—I don't know."

"We rarely do," returned the King. "However, in the end, we generally find out. And now, to advert to affairs of State, have you made all arrangements for this afternoon and to-night?"

The Prince nodded, hopelessly.

"Oh, yes. I shall be at the Station dressed as a Colonel of the Loranian Guards. I shall step forward at the exact minute and kiss the hand of the Royal Princess as she alights from the train."

"Excellent," said the King; "there will be no need to converse with her until the reception this evening."

"Then I suppose I shall have to say she's simply stunning and I'm falling over myself to rush her to the altar."

"It would be unusual," said the King; "but, on the other hand, it might be a very sound principle. I'd try it."

And smiling to himself he walked from the room.

HE found the Queen waging war against green fly in the conservatory.

"You know, sweetheart," he said, "our lad has got the hump."

The Queen looked up from her task.

"Poor old boy!" she mused. Then, in a brighter tone, "But she's a nice girl, or I wouldn't have chosen her. So don't you start worrying."

"You're a great comfort," said the King, and put his arm round her waist just as it might have been you or me.

It was unfortunate that the one snapshot of Prince Yvolt secured by Press representatives at the railway station should have caught him with an unmistakable yawn. It was doubly unfortunate since the type to accompany the photograph was already set up and read: "Our Prince ardently awaits his future bride." The editor, however, was a man of reason, and deliberately fogged the plate out of all recognition.

In other respects the conduct of the Prince was exemplary. He stepped forward at the right moment, kissed the hand of a girl whose face was almost hidden by a travelling veil. He escorted her between a quadruple line of troops to the State coach. Having arranged a footstool at her feet he mounted his charger and the *cortège* moved away, he riding at the side of his future bride.

And all the way to the Palace people cheered very lustily, handkerchiefs fluttered in the air, the sentimental gave way to sentiment—and all agreed that it was clearly a case of love at first sight.

Arrived at the Palace the Princess was handed over to the Queen-Mother, who spoke of "a nice fire in her room" and a cup of tea before she "bothered to dress."

Prince Yvolt clumped heavily up the grand stairway and flung himself full-length upon the bed.

"Why, why wasn't I born an ordinary sort of fellow?" he groaned, and again into his eyes stole that look which seemed to settle on a distant horizon. He lay thus for a while, then roused himself and shouted for a man, who entered and pulled off his boots.

"What will your Royal Highness wear?" inquired the servant.

"A string of beads," replied the Prince.

The servant smiled discreetly.

"I have laid these out for your Royal Highness."

The Prince looked at the semi-official Court-dress reposing in neatly-folded squares on a box couch, and demanded, unexpectedly:—

"Do I look all right in those things?"

"You look——"

"I want an honest answer."

"Top-hole," said the man.

"Splendid," said the Prince.

IT must be understood that the first evening was quite a modest affair. There were not more than a hundred to a hundred and fifty persons present. The programme included a frugal repast of eighteen courses, a small reception to include the introduction by the Prince to the Princess of some forty couples mainly composed of earls and politicians and their respective consorts, and finally a quite informal dance and supper.

In accordance with a time-honoured custom, before dinner was served the company withdrew from one corner of the room, which was left clear for the Prince and Princess to converse with one another and improve their mutual acquaintance.

Yvolt realized the approach of this terrifying ordeal when almost simultaneously those about him began retreating with their faces towards him after the fashion of a film working backward. Then from out of the press came his mother, tall, slim, and smiling, leading by her hand the Royal Princess.

Yvolt had scarcely noticed her at the railway station and the photographs had not prepared him for a girl so well-looking. She was not very tall, but beautifully proportioned. Her face was oval, pale, and shell-pink—her hair wavy and nut-brown—her eyes very blue and steady. He particularly noted her lips, which were full and rather pouting, and the fact that she seemed to hang back a little from the inevitable interview. Behind her head she held a single ostrich feather in an ungloved hand.

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"There," said the Queen, "Yvolt will amuse you until we go in to dinner."

She touched each of them lightly with the tips of her fingers, a delightful trick of hers, smiled, and moved away.

And the future bride and bridegroom looked at each other. Then she curtsied low and he bowed with a hand upon his heart and very gracefully was the duty performed.

"You come as a stranger, Princess, where you will reign a queen, in our heart and in the hearts of the——"

"I know," interrupted the Princess; "I read it in the Thesaurus, so unless you want to go on——"

"I don't," said the Prince, very gratefully, "and as a matter of fact I believe I'd forgotten the last bit."

She nodded sympathetically, then said:—

"What do you think about it?"

"Of course, one is delighted——"

"I'm not delighted."

"Aren't you, really?" His voice brightened out of recognition.

"No, why should I be——? This is the twentieth century, and——"

The Prince cast an eye round and coughed discreetly.

"I rather think," he whispered, with a note of warning.

"All right. I say, you play pretty useful golf, don't you?"

"Plus three—it's not up to much."

"I can't get below eight."

"But that's wonderful for a girl."

"The timing beats me."

"Practice gives it. I could show you a dodge——"

The great doors at the end of the room were flung open and the silver chimes of a clock touched the air. It was the signal for dinner.

IT was not, of course, possible for the young people to continue conversing in the same vein during the service of this stately banquet, and the King noted with satisfaction how adroitly Yvolt touched on Loranian politics, drawing neat parallels of the economic conditions of that country and his own. The Princess Lydia, too, showed herself equally skilled in this kind of exchange, and spoke of the two States with a wit and insight which delighted all hearers.

After dinner came the reception, a stately and formal affair conducted with a regard for ceremony which could not have been rivalled by the Courts of the Middle Ages.

In startling contrast to these graceful observances came the rattle and lament of a Jazz band especially imported from the South Pacific to do honour to the occasion.

"Come along," said the Prince, "it is for us to open the dance."

She put her hand upon his arm and they passed into the ball-room.

"Hesitation. Do you hesitate?" he inquired, with an ear to the music.

"I shall be lost if I don't," she smiled.

They waited for the beat and moved away together.

"What rot it all is," said the Prince, with a sigh. She nodded assent. "Why do we have to do it? We're humans, yet we might be a pair of ornaments for all the individual action we're allowed."

She looked up long enough to whisper:—

"I hate it, too."

"Of course you do. The whole thing is false. What could be more dreadful than to-night? The dinner—the reception—and now this stupid dancing. Dancing! It is all right to dance on a village green when you are a yokel and happy, but this! What's it mean—what's it for? Nothing!"

"Less than nothing," she nodded.

"I feel so strongly——" He paused. "I say, you've got this step a bit wrong. The stress comes on the half-beat."

"I have it," said she.

"Yes, that's better. American Walk they call it, I believe. It's rather jolly when you're well-matched. Instead of that pause, try putting your heels together and rising on your toes. Good! You're awfully quick. What were we saying?"

"All so stupid!"

"Yes. The total lack of free agency."

The music stopped.

"Thanks, very much. Shall we go through to the Winter Garden?"

"Ought we?"

"Yes, as a matter of fact we're supposed to."

"Then don't let's."

"We could talk there."

"Come on, then."

There was another couple in the far corner of the Winter Garden, but they bowed and curtsied themselves out of view.

"'Pon my soul," said Yvolt, "could anything be more crass?"

The Princess settled herself in a long Colombo chair and rested her steady eyes upon him.

"It's bad luck. How old are you?"

"Twenty-two."

"And I'm nineteen."

"Poor kid."

"And we must marry each other whether we want to or not."

She tapped with the toe of her tiny shoe and shot a quick glance at him.

"You don't want to marry me?"

"I can talk to you," said he. "You're understanding. I don't."

"Are you in love?"

"Yes, with freedom."

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"Only freedom?"

He dropped his head like a schoolboy. At last:—

"I've been in love," he said, "since I was sixteen. Would you like to hear about it?"

"Um!"

"It happened—I was run down—seedy, mopish, scared perhaps, and the Court doctors decided I should go away and spend a summer in the fields—simply. You understand, just me and my tutor. Couple of men-servants, some women, a few grooms, and a cook or two—quite simply—no fuss of any kind. Well, it happened then."

"Yes?"

"A farm was taken in a valley, miles from everywhere. A trout stream babbled at the garden end and one of its tributaries ran through a corner of the kitchen, making the most delightful whispering noises. By Jove! It was a summer, too! We moved in very modestly and set up housekeeping. I had a certain amount of tutoring in the mornings, but the rest of the day was spent roaming the woods, sometimes fishing, reading on the top of a haystack, a bit of shooting—any old quiet thing that came into one's head as worth doing. Old Graeme, that was my tutor, an Englishman, or rather Scotch, used to accompany me everywhere. He must have had strict injunctions on that point, and he was a whaler for carrying out orders. A good fellow. I liked him, but sometimes I yearned to be all on my own."

"I know," nodded the girl.

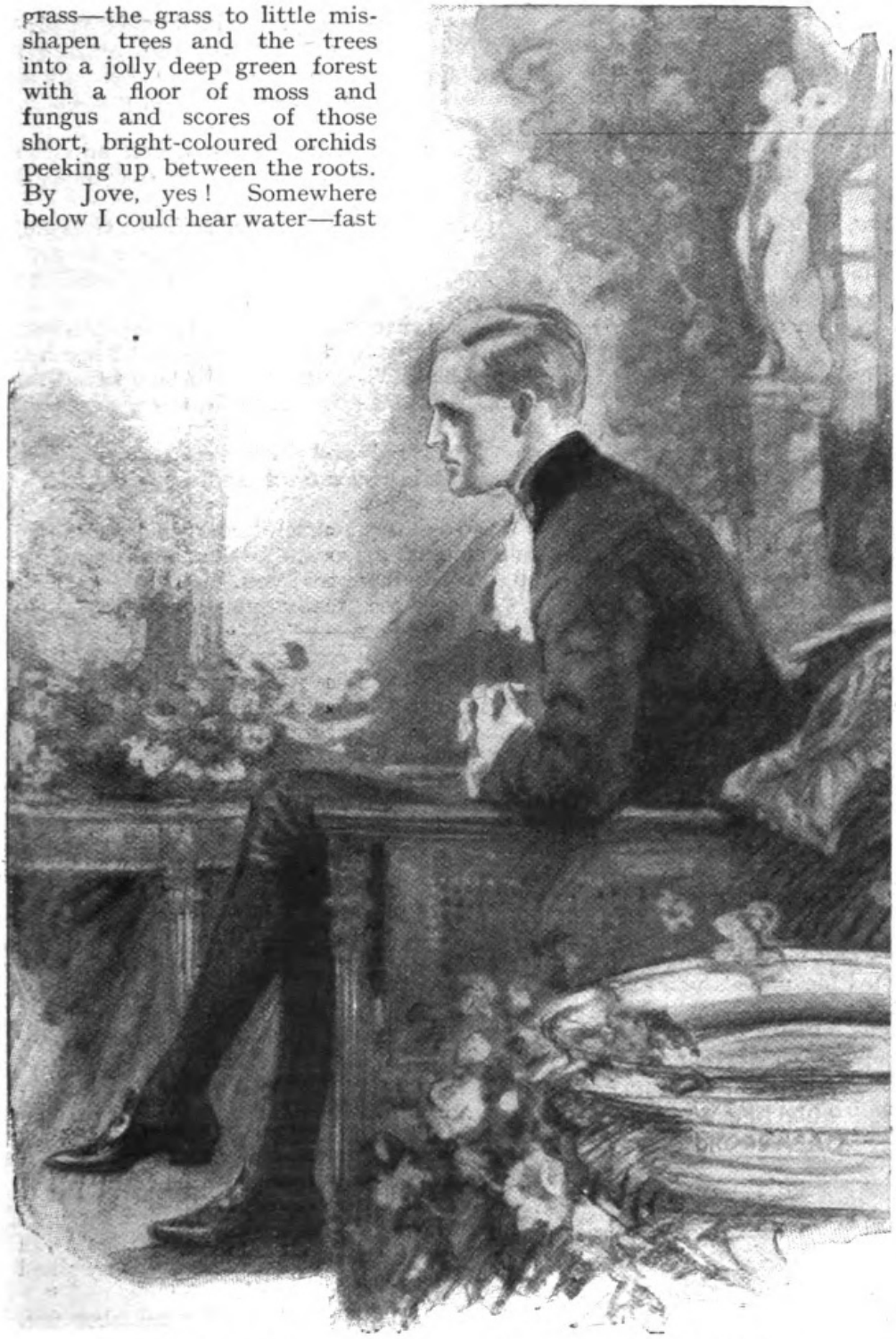
"I found, after a while, that he liked a snooze in the afternoon, and I seized upon the chance for a lonely walk. He made a bit of a fuss when I returned, but gradually I broke him into the idea and every afternoon I had a glorious wander by myself. Then one day I fixed to have a real expedition to a valley about five miles away. It was perfect weather and I didn't notice how far I walked. I just went on and on over the high ground of a saddle of hills. Presently the ground dipped—the heather turned to



"'You don't want to marry me?' said the Princess. 'I can talk

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grass—the grass to little misshapen trees and the trees into a jolly deep green forest with a floor of moss and fungus and scores of those short, bright-coloured orchids peeking up between the roots. By Jove, yes! Somewhere below I could hear water—fast



to you,' replied the Prince. 'You're understanding. I don't.'"

running water chasing its bubbles between rocks. So on I went—on and down until at last in a clearing of the trees I saw——"

"A girl?"

"Yes, a girl—how did you know?"

'It had to be. Go on."

"She was on her knees before a pool, washing a blue cotton dress by dipping and re-dipping it into the water. It was her own dress, for her arms were bare to the shoulders and she was wearing only a shabby white shift with some kind of rough peasant lace round the neck. She was very little even for her age, which was fourteen. She had the reddest hair, all loose—and her face!—I can't describe these things—it was so alive. I don't know how I dared, but I walked over and sat beside her on the grass.

"'Oh,' she said, 'who are you?'

"'I'm not anybody,' I replied; I just wanted to come and talk to someone.'

"For something to say—'I'm washing my frock,' she said.

"I asked if I might watch and she told me 'yes.' I don't think we talked of anything really, but somehow I learnt that her uncle had a farm half a mile down-stream, that he tilled a few acres and cut the timber. I know I felt very ashamed when she asked what work I did and I had to reply that it was just things with books. In her life men and boys had to use their hands if they wanted to eat bread."

The Prince lit a cigarette and threw the match burning to the floor.

"And I think she was right," he added, bitterly.

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The Princess put her foot on the tiny spout of flame.

"And then?" she queried.

"Then we hung the blue dress on the bough of a tree and watched it dry in the sun. She asked my name and I told her 'Prince.' She laughed at that and her teeth were small and white—like—like yours, and somehow, I don't know why, it came over me, but I said I loved her—and—and I had to explain what I meant. She—she didn't understand, you see."

"How did you explain?"

"I kissed her."

"And then she understood?"

"Yes."

"Yes, that *is* the way," said the Princess. "Did it make a difference?"

"Ever since," he replied. "Of course, we were only kids and meanings were small—yet, I don't know!"

"And then what happened?"

"I said I should never leave her and she saw, of course, that I couldn't. And we held hands until the light was gone. I can't remember talking, but everything was settled between us. I was to see her uncle on the morrow and get a job as a hand on the farm. Reason simply didn't exist—but happiness did—oh, yes, happiness did. That night I slept in the loft of a barn and she stole out after the rest were abed and we whispered together for hours and hours, while the rats scurried round us among the grain sacks. I was to be a man—she was to be my wife."

"Cophetua," said the Princess.

"She brought me milk and eggs in the morning, kissed me and watched me while I ate, and then I heard her uncle's voice in the yard below and the voice of Mr. Graeme, my tutor. They were raised and angry voices.

"'If he's not here now, he's been here,' said Mr. Graeme. 'That's his own dog and he tracked him every inch of the way.' And through a crack in the boards I saw my little terrier sniffing in the straw at the ladder foot. Suddenly he gave a sharp bark and started clambering up the worn wooden rungs.

"'Ah!' shouted Graeme, 'I thought as much,' and he started forward. But the peasant was too quick and mounted the ladder before him.

"'If you won't take my word you may look at an empty loft.'

"They found us clinging together in the shadow of a gable.

"'So,' said Mr. Graeme, very quietly.

"Her uncle's hand fell on my shoulder like a club. 'Young dog! I'll teach you to mess about with——' and he raised a short stick above his head.

"'For God's sake,' cried Mr. Graeme, and whispered a couple of frantic words in his ear.

"The man fell back and his jaw dropped.

"'The who—the Prince,' he repeated, tugging off his cap. Then in a voice that trembled in a dry throat: 'Bob, girl—bob, you fool!'

"I saw the flicker of her apron and the scared look in her eyes as she obeyed and dipped a curtsy.

"'Come, your Highness,' said Mr. Graeme, and I followed him into the sunlight below."

"And you never saw her again," said the Princess.

"I see her always," came the answer. "I have only to close my eyes and I see her now. She will have grown to be a beautiful woman—but I shall never become a man."

HE turned and looked at the Princess and a wave of awkwardness came over him.

"No one but yourself knows this. Graeme never spoke a word. I—I suppose really I oughtn't to have told you."

"I suppose really you oughtn't," she replied, "unless——"

"Well?"

"I were to make you a confidant, too."

"That would be splendid," said Yvolt.

She bit her lips thoughtfully for a moment, then began to speak rapidly.

"He—he was the bravest thing I ever saw."

"You're talking of——?"

"Him."

"I see. Well?"

"I first saw him exercising one of my father's race-horses. Such a brute. It was standing on its hind legs, waving its front ones in the air. It had red eyes and its nose was red, too."

"Wait a minute," said the Prince, rather confused. "Who are we talking about?"

"The horse he was riding. He just sat there and smiled while I stood with my back to the stable door and held my breath. He had a straw in his mouth and his cap pulled over one eye. I don't know how long it lasted—I was too spell-bound, but for ages the fight between them seemed to last. In the end he won, dismounted, and walked round to the horse's head.

"'Now,' he said, 'you'll remember me, won't you? No more larks in this quarter.' He whistled one of the stable hands, who came up and took the reins. Then he turned, saw me, and nodded.

"'A bit fresh,' he said; 'lively like.'

"I held out my hand. 'I don't know who you are,' I said, 'but I think you're the most magnificent man I've ever seen.'"

"When was all this?" inquired the Prince, with a vestige of a frown.

"Three years ago."

"Ah, um! Well?"

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" He just laughed. ' Think so, miss ? I'm not frightened of much.' I asked him if he knew who I was and he shook his head, so I told him, and because I was younger I gave him all my names and titles. ' Does that frighten you ?' I asked. ' I guess not,' he replied."

The Prince mumbled something incoherent—then :—

" What was this fellow ? "

" One of the riders in the stable and the bravest gentleman I ever met. I'd just come back from school, where—well, you know how it is—one was treated always rather——" She finished the sentence with a little movement of the hand. " I think it was his entire absence of anything of that kind made me see how remarkable he was. He didn't care whether I were a princess or a beggar girl. He smiled—that's all, and nodded. I could have lain down in front of him and let him walk over me."

" I hope you didn't."

" No. I was too proud. I wanted to make him acknowledge me—to conquer him. ' I think you are rather frightened,' I said, and looked straight into his eyes. He took the straw out of his mouth and scratched his chin with it (awfully primitive he was), then looked over his shoulder to be sure there was no one listening. ' If I kissed you you wouldn't,' he answered, returning my stare. ' You can,' I said, and perhaps I blushed a little, ' but not here. Meet me to-night in the fir wood at half-past nine, if you've got the pluck.' ' I will,' he nodded, and I turned away with my heart hammering—oh, madly."

" But—did you meet him ? "

The Princess clasped her hands and the veins showed very blue.

" I tried, but—I was followed. One of my mother's ladies followed me and came up at the very moment I stretched out my hands to him. So I never was kissed by the man I loved—and I never shall be. Never." She ended abruptly.

' Was this known ? "

" My father knew. Oh-h, it was—it was vile ! They sent him away, you know."

" And you never saw him again ? "

" No. I found out where he had gone, but—I—I never had the chance. We—we don't—do we ? "

" No," said the Prince, pathetically.

" So here we are, total strangers, marrying each other, and all the while——" She stopped and the light of an idea flashed in her eyes. " Yvolt—we don't love each other—why do we—conform ? "

" That's what I ask myself all day long."

" I don't want to be a Queen—you don't want to be a King."

' Not a bit."

" We just want to be ourselves."

" Yes."

" Well, why not ? "

He looked at her, puzzled.

" There's the State."

" There's ourselves." She plucked his sleeve. " Listen." She began to speak softly but very fast. At first Yvolt shook his head, but later into his eyes stole that far-away look. When she had finished on a questioning note he nodded his head, just once, and very slowly. Then he took her hand and pressed it.

" You are a sport," he whispered.

Looking up they saw the King approaching.

" I thought we could have a word or two about to-morrow's programme," he said, drawing up a chair.

The Prince hesitated, and looked quickly at the Princess for support.

" The Princess is feeling very tired," he said. " If it were possible to cancel to-morrow's programme ? "

" And conserve our energies for the State Ball at night ? Yes," said the King, and Yvolt echoed the word " Yes," but without enthusiasm.

' I am afraid the ball will be rather tiresome. To shake hands with two thousand people and find an appropriate phrase to suit the action in every case is not, to be frank, my conception of an ideal way of spending the evening. Between ourselves, my dear," he continued, in a more confidential tone, " I am a person of quiet tastes, and enjoy nothing so much as sitting in an arm-chair, toasting my toes, and reading aloud silly little paragraphs from the evening papers to my dear wife. Still, we can't always please ourselves. Ah, I hear the music ! If an old-fashioned waltzer would not prove unendurable ? " He rose and offered his arm to the Princess.

As they moved away, Yvolt overheard the words :—

" A good boy, but inclined to part his hair a trifle too low. You might speak to him about that."

THERE was no one moving when, at four o'clock the following morning, Prince Yvolt tip-toed down the great bedroom corridor and stood outside the Princess's door. He waited scarcely a moment before it opened and she stepped forth wrapped in a long cloak, a little fur hat, and a heavy veil. Their hands met in a short intense grip. They proceeded very warily, turned to the left, and came to a small window overlooking the Palace garden. A few feet beneath was the top of the high wall which enclosed the Royal pleasance from the world without.

" It's risky," whispered Yvolt, " but if we

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went by the doors we should have to pass the Guard and questions would be asked."

The Princess looked out of the window and nodded.

"Shut your eyes if you feel nervous."

He swung over the sill and felt about with his feet. Presently they touched the wall-top, and a moment later he was standing, one hand gripping a rain-pipe and the other extended.

"Ready?" said the little Princess.

"Yes."

A SLANT of thin morning sunlight caught her face as she committed herself to the safety of his one free arm, and Prince Yvolt thought he had never seen anything more fragile or more lovely. There was little time for speculation, however, as it was by no means easy to deliver her to the precarious security of the wall-top. On either hand was a twenty-foot drop, but she did not close her eyes.

A second later they were standing like tight-rope walkers at the beginning of their act.

"We must walk along this for about eighty yards. Then the trees will hide us from the Palace windows."

"Very well," she smiled.

"Hold on to my coat-belt."

He turned and, cat-like, began to pick his steps along the narrow edge of brickwork. In places it was worn and the going perilous, but no tremor came from the little hand that clasped his belt. At last they came to the shelter of the trees.

"Let's sit down," he said, and they did so.

"I've a light rope I'm going to fasten to a bough. It will be easy then to lower ourselves."

He fumbled in his pocket and produced the rope, waisted and twisted like a figure eight.

"This bough ought to do, it's—oh, Lord!" He turned a white scared face from the roadway to the Princess, and she laughed—a merry, light-hearted, care-free laugh. For in the road below lay the twist of rope that the Prince had dropped.

"I've ruined everything—there's no other way down."

"We shall have to jump."

"It's twenty feet."

Again she laughed.

"Who wouldn't jump twenty feet for the sake of freedom?" she said.

"You're wonderful," breathed the Prince. "Here goes."

She saw the flash of his tweeds—he did not bother to recover his hat, but held up his arms to her.

"I'll catch you—don't stop to think."

As she passed down through the air the top of his uncovered head was all she was aware of. He did part his hair rather too low, perhaps—for a Prince. They clung together as she steadied herself from the fall, and felt each other's hearts beating in tune to the excitement that was theirs.

"Only two minutes to the car," he said. And they broke into a run.

A quarter of an hour later the city was a mere speck faintly discernible through the dun-coloured dust-cloud that whirled in the wake of the onrushing motor.

"MY compliments to the Prince," the King addressed his secretary, "and I should be glad to see him."

The secretary returned almost immediately.

"Your Majesty," he said, "the Prince is not in the Palace."

The King raised his head and frowned.

"Send for the Prince's man. Tell him to wait outside the door," said he.

The telephone bell from the Queen's apartment sounded sharply. The King picked up the receiver as the secretary went out.

"The Princess has gone." It was the Queen's voice. "She must have left her room about four o'clock. One of her ladies found a wrist-watch lying broken on the floor. It had stopped at that hour."

"All right," said the King. "Don't worry, I'll come and see you in a minute."

He replaced the receiver and opened the door. The Prince's valet entered.

"What clothes did his Highness wear this morning?"

"A rough tweed suit, your Majesty, and a heavy ulster."

"A motoring coat?"

"Yes, your Majesty."

The King rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"Lock the doors of the Prince's apartments and—and of your conversation. That will do."

He turned and touched the bell and his secretary returned.

"You will have a paragraph inserted in all the papers to the effect that it is feared the Prince and Princess have become infected with the germs of influenza. At the suggestion of the Court Physician they will remain in their rooms until the disease declares itself or otherwise."

"And the State Ball, Your Majesty?"

"Will be held," came the incisive reply.

The King made his way to the Queen's boudoir.

"They've bolted," he said; "both of them."

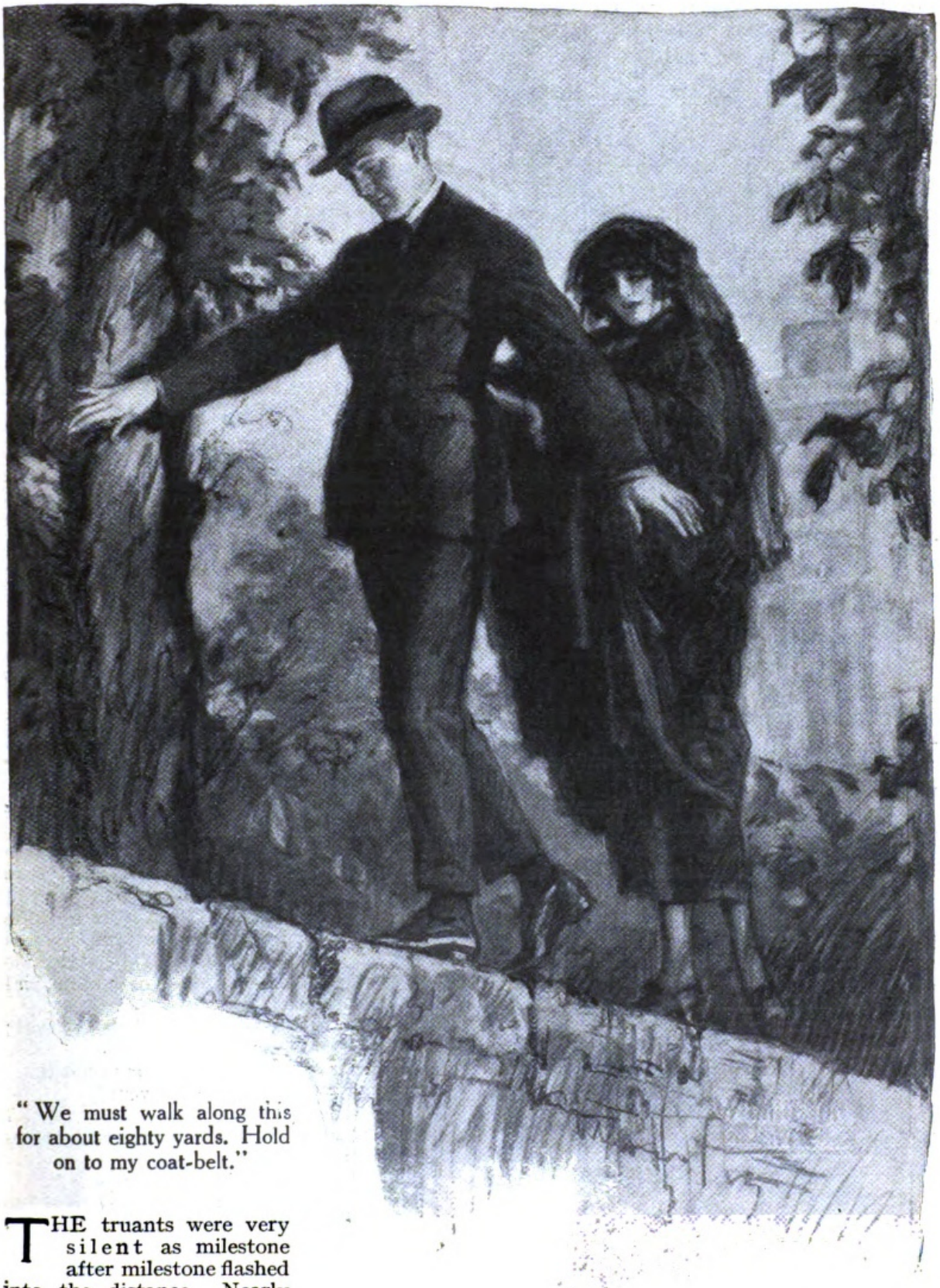
"Yvolt, too?"

"Yes. They've gone."

"But why?"

"My dear, how should I know?" he replied, and sat down all of a heap.

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"We must walk along this for about eighty yards. Hold on to my coat-belt."

THE truants were very silent as milestone after milestone flashed into the distance. Nearly two hundred miles separated them from the capital. The fringe of hills on the sky-line marked the frontier and nestling below rose the spires and smoke of a market town.

"We'll get another car there. You—you're sure you can drive?"

"Yes—anything."

"They'll stop you at the frontier"

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" I sha'n't try to pass it. I'll leave the car in the woods and steal over through a little gorge to the left of the road."

" Will you have far to go ? "

" The stables are only just the other side."

The Prince nodded—a trifle absently.

" Why can't I drive you to the frontier ? "

" I might want the car," she answered.

He hesitated. " You've—no doubt of any kind ? "

" No, none."

" He'll be good to you ? You're sure of that ? "

" Yes—he's wonderful, you see."

" H'm ! I shall strike away north-north-east. About sixty to seventy miles of clear road, then on foot following the stream. I should be there by two."

" Ye-es," the Princess sighed. " I hope she'll be everything you—you see her. And you'll be so happy."

" I hope so," but his tone sounded uncertain.

Silence again and they entered the outskirts of the little town. The Prince pulled up before a garage.

" I want a car," he said.

" To hire ? "

" That'd do."

" I've no one to drive it, though."

" This lady drives."

" Yes, I know, but——"

" If you've any doubt I'll buy it," said the Prince.

" I don't mind selling. It's only an old Ford, but it goes, y'know."

He named a price and the Prince counted some notes into his hand.

' Ready for the road, is she ? "

" Will be in five minutes. Tyres aren't startling and she rattles a bit—still ! "

It was not long before the little car was snuffing and chortling in the yard.

" Well," said the Prince, " it's good-bye now."

She put out her little hand into his.

" You—you're the pluckiest girl I ever met—amazing ! and I hardly know how to say good-bye to you. Perhaps, later on, when you've married him and I her we could all go and stay with each other and be together again."

" Yes," whispered the Princess. " Yes. Then we won't say good-bye—only till the next meeting."

" And may it be soon." He raised her fingers to his lips. " God bless you."

" And God bless you," she said.

He helped her into the car and stood watching till she vanished round a bend in the road. Then he shook himself and said, " I'm free."

A moment later he was roaring away to the north-north-east.

" THERE is nothing to be done," said the King, " except to hope for the best and wait."

" But suppose they never return ? "

" My dear," he replied, " there is an old proverb, ' Put not thy faith in princes,' but my motto is to ignore that proverb and to put my faith in princes, and I mean to keep it there as long as I live. Sooner or later every man takes up his burden and shoulders it and does the right thing, though at times he may throw it aside and strike and do the wrong thing. Shall we go out to the Zoo this afternoon and stroll about and talk to the people ? "

" If you like," said the Queen. " I have to be at the Infant Welfare Centre at five."

" I'll come and have a look at the jolly little beggars," said the King.

PRINCE YVOLT left the car by the roadside and struck across the woods. He felt in a turmoil—his mind was not at ease—there was no ecstasy—none of that mighty glow of freedom he had believed would be his. He had not eaten for many hours and an empty stomach is a poor stimulus to joy. Here were the woods just as he had pictured them and below the brook still sang its speed-song to the rocks, and yet—where was that glorious impulse of youth which years before had led him light-footed to the spot ? Through a rift in the foliage he saw the blue of ascending smoke. The farm ! She would be there with her red hair and the splendour of womanhood enveloping her.

He took a deep breath and forced a way through the plaited undergrowth.

A man was leaning on the yard gate smoking a short pipe and staring out before with a vacant calm. Yvolt recognized him as the girl's uncle and little changed by time or season. But by the light of added years he seemed to have diminished in stature—to be less essentially virile—rather blunt and stupid-looking, in fact.

" I'm off the beaten track," said Yvolt ; " could you give me a meal ? "

The man took the pipe from his mouth.

" If you pay for it," he answered.

" Why, of course."

They crossed the yard and entered a stone-flagged kitchen.

" I'll tell her to send you something."

He went out through another door, and the Prince sat down to wait before a rough-adzed pine table.

He became aware that his hands were trembling and of a painful dryness in the throat. A sense of expectancy and anxiety ran through him in thrill and counter-thrill. After what seemed an age-long interval, the door was bumped open by a tray held in the hands of a short girl of loose peasant build.

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"'Won't you bear me company while I eat?' he begged."

She came forward and put the tray before him with a noisy clatter.

"It's all we can do," she said.

Prince Yvolt drew in his breath and looked at her.

Her hair had been knotted with a careless hand, and here and there was wisping across her brow and shiny cheeks. Her lips, which he had remembered as a bow of cherry red, now seemed to hang listless and slack. Her eyes, though still bright, seemed to have grown small, and were no longer limpid and tranquil. She did not seem to know what

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to do with her hands, which she smeared aimlessly on her holland apron.

"I am more than lucky to have found such hospitality," said he.

She giggled and moved towards the door.

"Won't you bear me company while I eat?" he begged.

"Oh, I couldn't," she answered.

"But surely, I—I should be very grateful."

She flashed an arch glance at him.

"I 'spect you would," she said, with stupid meaning.

It was not the tone of familiarity that jarred so hideously upon the Prince, but rather the quality of knowingness, the artful look, and the air of being fly.

Hurriedly he dropped his eyes and made pretence to attack the loaf and the cheese she had placed before him. When next he looked her way she was standing near the door rubbing her back against the wall and peeping curiously in his direction.

"You remind me," he said, "of someone I knew long ago. Can you guess, I wonder?"

She made no reply.

"It was someone I was very fond of."

She gave a splutter of laughter, then straightened her face.

"Oo! You are awful," she said.

And at her word a panic seized the Prince. He threw some silver on the table, grabbed his hat, and bolted from the house.

"Hey!" yelled a man's voice. "Hey! Have you paid?"

'By God, I should think I have!" echoed the Prince. He vaulted the fence and flung himself into the shadow of the woods.

For half an hour he went forward ceaselessly, then stopped beneath a huge fir a mile from the road.

"But still I have my freedom," he cried. And it seemed as if a whole chorus of mocking voices shouted "No, no, no."

He sat down, covered his eyes, and groaned.

"I've thrown away everything—duty, honour, everything. Disgraced in the eyes of the nation and in my own, I can never go back."

He pulled out his watch and looked at it. Three o'clock. Two hundred and fifty miles from the capital. The great State Ball opened at nine o'clock. At an average speed of a little over forty miles an hour it might be done. He sprang to his feet and started furiously down hill. Then he thought of the Princess and stopped. Suppose he arrived in time—she would not be there. Scandal was inevitable, and yet—they were his people and he their Prince. His duty was toward them. In time they would forget the little Princess who ran away—in time another marriage would be arranged. Nothing would be gained by his absence—and so much would be lost irredeemably. For the first time he thought of the King and the Queen who were father and mother to him in the truest and the finest sense. It would be for them to face the scandal.

"Oh, what a fool I've been," he cried. "Why did I do it—why did I let her do it?"

He broke into a run, leaping the runnels of laughing water and the mighty trunks of fallen trees.

THE little Princess came to the enclosure of stables as a harsh-tongued clock struck one. A stable-boy was filling a bucket at a pump and she called to him and asked a question.

"Yes, I could find him," said the boy; "he's sure to be about."

Closely-veiled, she waited by the white railings, and presently a man wearing a loud-coloured suit and box-cloth gaiters came into view, accompanied by the boy. With a little shudder it struck her that he looked rather dreadful at a distance. The boy pointed in her direction, collected his bucket, and went away. The man came forward to where she stood, and she saw that his face was crimson and pouchy.

"Well?" said the Princess.

"What can I do for you, miss?" said the man.

"You don't recognize me?"

He shook his head. She lifted her veil. He looked, started, and fell back a pace.

"Well?" she repeated.

He licked his lips anxiously.

"What—what does your Highness want?" he said, almost rudely.

A look of surprise came into the Princess's eyes.

"You're frightened of me—why?" she asked. "I've come all this way to——"

"Don't tell me," he interrupted. "No, please don't. It may be only a joke with you, but with me it's serious."

"It is serious with me," she said.

But he shook his head and continued rapidly:—

"I was a fool—behaved like a fool, but I learnt my lesson. No good comes in monkeying with people above you—or below you, for that matter."

The Princess drew herself up and looked at him, puzzled.

"I learnt my lesson and got the sack and it's been uphill work ever since. I reckon that five minutes cost me about three years. Well, now I've got responsibilities—big ones—and as I said, I don't know what you've come for—can't guess even; but you'd be doing me a real kindness, Princess, very real, if you wouldn't mind—just—going away."

She was silent for a moment while she rearranged the veil over her face.

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" Responsibilities ? " she said.

" Yes. I'm married, for one thing."

The Princess swallowed.

" I knew," she answered, lightly, " but I haven't an idea why you are so agitated. I merely wanted to congratulate you—that's all."

Without another word she turned on her heel and walked away.

" He oughtn't to have let me come—he oughtn't, oughtn't," she wailed, when a mile separated her from the stables.

" I can't go home—what can I do ? "

A man will take hours over a deliberation that a woman will make in a second. The Princess struck through the gorge to the wood beyond the frontier, where the tilted Ford was waiting by the roadside. She cranked up the engine and was facing toward the capital an hour and a half before the similar impulse possessed Prince Yvolt sixty miles away to the north.

A LITTLE after four o'clock Prince Yvolt streaked through the market town where he had bade farewell to the Princess, and the townsfolk flung themselves to right and left as he roared by. The roads were white, straight, and even, and mile upon mile unfolded before him like a ribbon. On the crest of a distant rise he saw the dust of a motor-bicycle travelling at very high speed in the same direction as himself. A cross wind carried the dust sideways, and the Prince caught a glimpse of the rider's back, to which was attached a white card with a black number on. Evidently a competitor in some reliability trial, he conjectured, and was galled that any machine could keep the lead.

He topped the crest a moment later, and there was the cycle still pounding away half a mile in front.

" I'll catch that beggar and pass him," said the Prince.

He gave the carburettor a speck more air and pressed the accelerator pedal level with the foot-boards. The gradient was



" Framed in the opening of the swing doors stood the little Princess. ' Am I late ? ' she asked."

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steep, too steep to drive all out, but the Prince took no account of this. Out of the corner of his eye he saw the needle of the speed indicator rise to sixty-seven and hover there. Two minutes later he had left the motor-cyclist behind in a smother of dust and choking blue smoke from the roaring exhaust.

"Nothing before me now," he said, exultingly.

But somewhere on the road far in front the Ford was achieving unrivalled feats of reliability and endurance under the caressing hand of the little Princess.

PRESENTLY the sun dipped behind the range of hills, and darkness trailed her shadows across the plains.

"It's difficult to see," said the Princess, "but I can't help it, Mr. Ford, and you'll do your best to stay on the road, won't you? Only another sixty miles to go—that isn't far, is it? And it is so frightfully important I shouldn't disgrace——"

Bang! P-f-sssss!

It was a front tyre, and the steering-wheel was wrenched clean out of her hand. She jerked at the side-brake, and the back wheels slugged across—this way—that—then with a soft oozy squelch settled into a ditch by the roadside.

For a moment she remained in her seat, then climbed over the side of the slanting car, sat down on the running-board, and cried; and night stole round her and covered up the tears she shed.

Through the darkness came a low vibrant hum. She sprang to her feet and listened.

"It's a motor," she gasped.

The sound increased—the fierce throb of a high-power engine. Then through the trees came the blinding glare of the head-lights, flinging long shadows of the trunks across the bend of the road.

She held up her arms as the car came on, and in that second she recognized it.

"Yvolt!" she cried. "Yvolt!"

But the Prince only saw a glimpse of a dark figure and the outline of a car in the ditch. He swerved to avoid both one and the other and sped on unheeding. Moments were too precious to be spent in roadside chivalry.

She saw the tail light, bright for an instant, dwindle to a tiny red speck and disappear, and into her heart came an utter blank of misery and despair.

Beaten, and with arms down-hanging, she stood in the road insensible to everything.

The motor-cyclist only just saw her in time. He yelled a warning and clapped his feet on to the ground. To avoid her entirely was impossible, so he threw out an arm, and for several yards they slipped and rocked side by side till the machine came to a standstill.

"That was a near touch," said the man. "You hadn't ought to stand in the road like that, miss. Are you hurt?"

But the Princess saw that deliverance was at hand.

"No. I must get to the capital—you—you will take me to the capital?"

The man shook his head.

"I'm sorry, miss, but I'm riding this bike on a trial, and I'm in a fair way to winning a hundred pounds. If I took you I should lose it."

"But you must," she insisted; "absolutely must."

"Don't see any reason," said he. "It's a good prize, and this is my living."

"I'm the reason," came the answer, in a small plaintive voice. "Would you mind looking at me?"

She lifted her veil and stood for an instant before his head-lamp.

"Lord!" gasped the man; "but you——"

"I know—I've been very silly—I ran away, and oh! I do want to run back so badly. You—you're a gentleman—you could help me."

"I'm not a gentleman," returned the other; "I'm just a very ordinary mechanic, but I reckon I ought to be able to do this without asking questions. Jump up."

And the Royal Princess of Lorania continued her journey on the flapper bracket of a racing motor-bicycle, with her arms tight about the waist of an oily mechanic.

Unchallenged by the Guard, who recognized the car, Prince Yvolt swung into the Palace yard at eight-forty-five, and dashed up the grand stairway to his apartment, stripping off his coat as he went.

"Won't they stop me at the gate?" asked the professional rider as the Palace windows came into view.

"They mustn't."

"They won't, then!"

To the amazement of the waiting crowd and of the Guard itself, a mud-and-dust-bespattered motor-cycle with two passengers shot through the Palace gate at anything between thirty and forty miles an hour.

"Bring them back!" shouted the officer.

But the second returned with no one but the rider.

"There were two of you—who was the second?" demanded the officer.

"It's a funny thing," came the answer, "but I've clean forgotten."

In his hand was a small kerchief embroidered with a tiny crown. A mere trifle of cambric, but it might have helped a man to remember a lady's name—or to forget it.

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THE great room was packed to suffocation, and the people were surprised to see the Prince enter alone. He passed up the centre to the gold-draped dais. He seemed different, somehow, less boyish, more remote and imperial. Neither the King's expression nor the Queen's altered in the least as he came into view and bowed before them.

"You cut it a little fine, Yvolt," murmured the King; then in an even lower voice, "And the Princess?"

Yvolt shook his head.

"She will not come back," he said.

For a moment the King and Queen looked at each other.

"Shall I tell them?" asked Yvolt.

"Yes. But gently, you understand. The Princess did not feel happy, perhaps, in Terra Nova. I see you have parted your hair in the orthodox way. These little things help in moments like this."

Prince Yvolt caught his breath with something like a sob as he turned to address the people.

"My lords, ladies, and gentlemen——"

The swing doors at the end of the room were flung back, and framed in the opening stood the little Princess, a vision of white and silver.

"Am I late?" she asked, with the most ingenuous smile in the world—and every heart in the room was hers.

In the little hours of morning the Prince and Princess found themselves in a deserted corner of the Winter Garden, hidden from view by a screen of palms and cactus.

"We'll never run from each other again," he whispered.

"I don't suppose we ever shall," she replied.

"It nearly tore out my heart saying good-bye to you this morning."

"That's why I wouldn't say it," said she.

"We were fools, but we're not any longer."

"What are we now?"

"I'm a lover," he answered, rather tremblingly.

"How can you make me believe that?" she said.

"I can only tell you."

She picked at her dress for a moment, then:—

"Couldn't you—explain?"

He looked at her and understood.

"Oh, you absolute darling!" he gasped, when he had given the explanation.

PERPLEXITIES.

SOLUTIONS TO LAST MONTH'S PUZZLES.

504.—A MOTOR-CAR JOURNEY.

THERE are 3,432 different routes from Y to Z. Deduct all routes passing through A (840), through B (1,400), and through C (792). This will leave 400. Now add all routes passing through both A and B (320), through A and C (112), and through B and C (280). This gives us 1,112, from which we deduct all routes passing through A, B, and C (64), leaving 1,048 as the correct answer. Readers can verify the details for themselves.

505.—THE SEVEN CHILDREN.

THERE are 5,040 ways of arranging the children and 720 different ways of placing a girl at each end. Therefore the chances are 720 in 5,040, or 1 in 7. Or, which is the same thing, the chances are 1 to 6 in favour, or 6 to 1 against, there being a girl at both ends.

506.—A CHARADE.

THE word is EAR-NEST.

507.—A DAY'S SPORT.

THE man must have shot 32 birds and 8 rabbits. This would account for the 40 heads and 96 feet.

508.—MENTAL ARITHMETIC.

To multiply 993 by 879 mentally, proceed as follows. Transfer 7 from 879 to 993, and we get 872 and 1,000, which, multiplied together, produce 872,000. And 993 less 872 is 121, which, multiplied by the 7, will produce 847. Add the two results together and we get 872,847 as the correct answer.

["Perplexities," unavoidably held over, will appear next month.]

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TRICKS OF THE TRADE

Art and "The Artful Dodger"



MUCH has already been written as to the art of faking, the various devices for worm-eating, coloration and discoloration, the imposition of modern carving in the old manner upon antique pieces originally devoid of decoration, and so on.

One genuine piece of furniture, for example, is often divided up, and its several parts used in part construction of a number of different pieces. Thus, the panels from a genuine old oak chest may be used to adorn respectively, in prominent positions, a cupboard, a chest of drawers, a dresser, and a stool, the remaining portions of these being skilfully fashioned in exact imitation of the one genuinely old bit in each. Similarly, one genuine antique chair finds itself included in a set of six, the remaining five being faithful copies of their one authentic fellow. Naturally the five remain in the background more or less while the one is being displayed to the buyer-collector, who, in the majority of cases, does not dream of challenging their equal claims to examination.

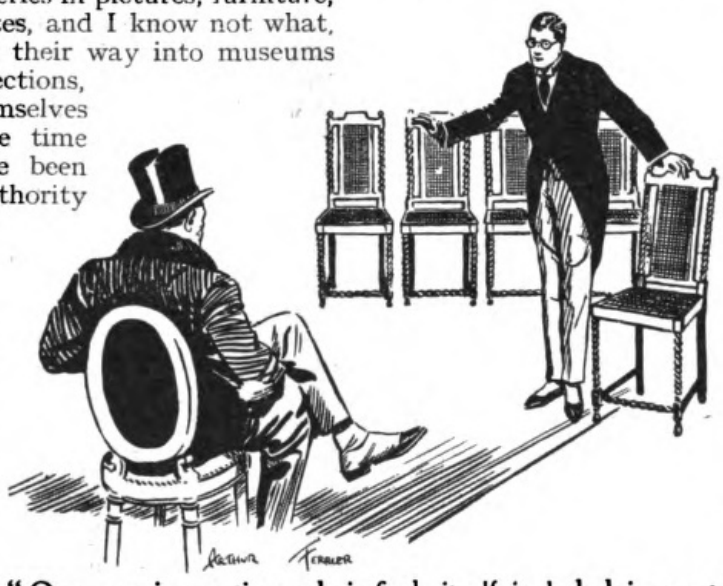
This article, however, proposes to deal not so much with this particular form of deception as with the ruses employed either for building up a false reputation around a "work of art" when faked, or for foisting it upon the unwary. So adroit are many of the devices employed that it is often impossible to deny them a certain admiration. For diplomacy, farsightedness, and a profound psychological insight into the weaknesses of human nature, its greed, its vanity, and its insatiable love of a bargain, figure among the many qualities required to ensure success. Thus, it was something little short of genius which inspired the gentleman who figured in the famous Rembrandt case, which was engineered soon after the Tax on Antiques was brought into force in the United States to enact that every antique imported should pay a specially heavy duty. This master of diplomacy had for some time been in touch with an artist, who executed for him especially skilful copies of Old Masters, under the impression that they were intended for the decoration of his home. On one occasion a Rembrandt portrait was given him to copy, which copy the patron declared to be so fine a bit of artistic work that the copyist's own name should be placed over the Rembrandt signature. The artist, much flattered, did as he was bid, and the picture was shipped to the States, truthfully described on the official forms as the copy that it was. Then came in the diplomacy. No sooner had the package been accepted for transport than the owner himself addressed to the authorities an anonymous note declaring the picture to be a genuine Rembrandt, in proof



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of which statement it was alleged that if the signature which figured in the corner were removed, that of Rembrandt himself would be found beneath it. The plot worked well. At the other end the picture was detained, an expert was called in, who removed the name, found the well-known mark of Rembrandt himself below it, and declared the canvas to be indeed by the hand of the Master. The owner was fined for having misrepresented the work as by a modern artist, and paid the forfeit with the best heart in the world. For, in the meantime the story had circulated throughout the Press as to his would-be fraud on the American Government, the painting had been "boomed" among the whole of the American art-collecting world, and amateurs of more money than discrimination were falling over one another to acquire the treasure. The fine imposed was emphatically worth while. In more than one case, I understand, the fraud, though ultimately discovered by the expert, was never publicly made known, for the reason that he was naturally not anxious to declare his fallibility.

For the same reason it happens all over the world that forgeries in pictures, furniture, china, silver, bronzes, and I know not what, having once found their way into museums and public collections, seldom find themselves exposed. At some time or other they have been "passed" by an authority on the subject, and it is a poor policy to undermine the faith of the public in those who are supposed to be their artistic guides, philosophers, and friends. There is a certain code of honour among critics just as there is another among the dealers themselves. The professional thief has no monopoly in it.



"One genuine antique chair finds itself included in a set of six, the remaining five being faithful copies."

HERE is another ruse on the part of the unscrupulous dealer. An influential collector, preferably a noble lord, or someone well in the eye of the public, buys, let us say, a table, for a moderate price. Soon after the transaction the dealer comes to him with the information that knowledge has come to his ears that there is reason to doubt the authenticity of the piece (which, by the way, is usually a perfectly genuine article, though not of conspicuous merit). Sooner than sell anything doubtful, the dealer would prefer to buy back the article. He may even offer his client a small profit on it, to give an added bait to the proposal. The unsuspecting buyer, pleased with the transparent honesty of the vender, falls in with the suggestion (registering the while a vow to employ so honourable a fellow henceforth to the exclusion of all else), accepts his cheque, and gives a formal receipt for it. The table in the dealer's next transaction figures as "from Lord So-and-So's collection," in support of which statement there is his lordship's receipt.

In some cases, of course, the noble lord is himself a party to the transaction. Or it may be a noble lady, for the Society woman is nowadays a very favourite agent of the dealing profession. A common ruse of the day is to "plant" a work of art in the house of some *grande dame*. In the Duchess of So-and-So's beautiful drawing-room the picture, or the commode, excites universal admiration. "It is a new acquisition, is it not?" inquire the lady's intimates. "Alas," she replies, "it can hardly be called an acquisition as yet. It has come from Messrs. Blank in Bonduit Street, but its price is so high that it is doubtful whether I shall be able to afford it. It is quite likely that I shall have to decide to send it back. It will be a thousand pities, for it is a lovely thing. Yet——" "Oh, dear Duchess, if you should decide not to take it yourself, do let me be the first to know, so that I may have the opportunity of securing it. It is exactly what I have been looking for for my boudoir. I should simply love to have it." And she has it, and the Duchess pockets a very nice little commission.

Whenever one finds a Society woman of good standing selling the contents of her house, lock, stock, and barrel, it is fairly safe to conclude, says one authority on the subject, that those contents are not hers at all, but come from the professional dealer. Bridge-parties and receptions afford plenty

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of people the opportunity for admiring the taste and beauty of the lady's setting, and sooner or later comes the offer. It is no difficult matter to arrange with a firm in town to equip a house for the season, provided your social standing is such as to justify faith in your powers as an agent. It is a great advantage to be able to take over the entire equipment of a house belonging to a lady of taste and standing. There are few ventures of this type that do not eventually "come off."



Then, too, there is nothing like a good ancestral home as a dumping-ground for a doubtful bit of furniture or for a picture that, to use a trade expression, has been "hawked." Clients are apt to be suspicious at times in a way which would not occur to them were the object in a well-known private collection. So the dealer discovers some way of getting into close touch with the scion of an ancestral home, arranges a commission, and hangs, say, among the family portraits, one which has no connection whatever with them. The client, who is in search of some "pedigree" painting, such as the breath of calumny could never touch, is told that it belongs to the collection of Lord Tomnoddy, and is even now hanging in the portrait gallery in his country estate at ———. It is so precious that My Lord will not allow it to be removed to town, so the client must needs take with the dealer the short journey into the country and view the picture in its own surroundings. Purchase inevitably results.

THERE is a pleasing variation to this story. A dealer comes across a portrait of comparative unimportance which is supposed to be that of some member of a well-known family. He sends it, without any instructions, to the head of the house, well knowing that the gentleman is away from home for some considerable time. He follows this up by a letter explaining as a reason for his action his belief that his lordship would prefer the option of purchase rather than have the portrait offered elsewhere. By means of a generous *douceur* the dealer makes friends with the family butler, who arranges to have the picture hung pending his master's return. But before this takes place the dealer brings with him a client who has been informed of the possibility of acquiring a portrait from the ——— family, and who thus sees it in its family surroundings. No wonder he acquires it.



Another instance. An owner may discover a second-rate Gainsborough. He puts this up at Christie's, and sends a number of friends to bid for it and run it up to an abnormal sum, buying it in himself at the finish at a price much above its value. It is recorded that this particular Gainsborough has reached a colossal price at the famous salerooms. The auctioneer's commission is well worth paying, for the sake of the excellent advertisement. The picture's name is made; its future is assured.

ANOTHER fallacy which often leads the amateur astray is his belief in what he is pleased to call his "flair," an instinct which he usually believes himself to possess to a peculiar degree, and which he puts in place of that study and intimacy of knowledge which it should be his business to acquire for himself. One might as well accept the plea of "flair" from a surgeon, in lieu of a lengthy training in the operating theatre. The love of a bargain also deludes the amateur too often into acquiring at a moderate price something which, if genuine, must be worth very considerably more. He in fact backs his "flair" against the dealer's expert knowledge, and so actually plays into the latter's hands. A little knowledge is indeed a dangerous thing. So is vanity. So is conceit.

The fascination which the fetish of the "genuine" exercises over the imagination of mankind is, to some extent, irrational. In many instances copies of an Old Master carried out by his pupils, under his own supervision, are equal in every way to the original. And yet the one, if sold frankly as a copy, will scarcely command as many pence as the other will fetch pounds. No wonder picture-frauds are even more common than those in furniture and bronzes! One common ruse in regard to the "faked" picture is to propose when selling it that, in order to preserve it, the painting shall be transferred from the old broken canvas to a new one. The advantages of this course are so obvious to the buyer that its primary disadvantage is lost sight of. This consists of the added difficulty which occurs on its accomplishment of detecting fraud. For it is by the genuineness of the original canvas that the authenticity of a work is first tested. Once this means of detection has

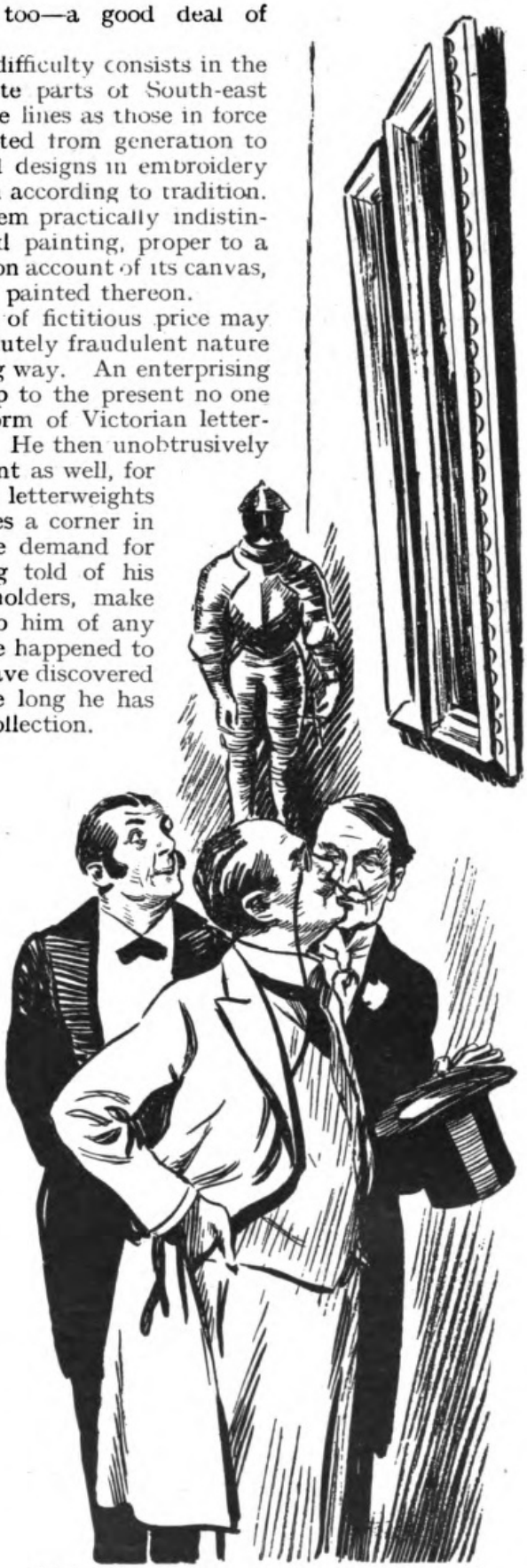
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been removed—and at the buyer's desire, too—a good deal of inconvenient risk has been safely obviated.

Another means of circumventing the canvas difficulty consists in the use of a canvas such as is still made in remote parts of South-east Europe by peasant-folk, who weave on the same lines as those in force some four centuries ago, the art being transmitted from generation to generation much on the same lines as Oriental designs in embroidery and pottery are handed down from father to son according to tradition. Such canvases can be treated so as to make them practically indistinguishable from the old. Or some worthless old painting, proper to a certain bygone period, may be bought up purely on account of its canvas, the paint removed, and the fresh "Old Master" painted thereon.

Another instance of the way in which a sort of fictitious price may be induced—though there is nothing of an absolutely fraudulent nature involved in the business—occurs in the following way. An enterprising person discovers some type of antique which up to the present no one has thought of collecting. It may take the form of Victorian letter-weights or Georgian kettle-holders, for example. He then unobtrusively scours the British Isles, and even the Continent as well, for examples, good, bad, or indifferent, of Victorian letterweights and Georgian kettle-holders. In fact, he makes a corner in them, at very low prices, of course, since the demand for these is practically nil. All his friends, being told of his curious weakness for letterweights and kettle-holders, make nice, cheap Christmas and birthday presents to him of any Victorian or Georgian examples which may have happened to be handed down in their family, or which they have discovered at a low price in curio shops. And so before long he has acquired a really unique and quite interesting collection.

THEN comes the time for strategy. He may, if gifted with literary feeling, write, or get written for him, a series of quite amusing articles, illustrated, on the subject of Victorian letterweights and Georgian kettle-holders, and their relation to the social conditions of the day, their significance, and their decorative relationship to the furniture, embroideries, and metal work of their time. The illustrations will be taken, of course, from his own collection, and will be copious. Having secured a handy little Press boom, he may in course of time follow it up by an exhibition of his curios at one of the galleries. All this will help to spread the good news that Victorian letterweights and Georgian kettle-holders are emphatically the things to collect, and that Mr. X. has an amazingly fine collection of them. The scheme has by this time sent the prices of the letter-weights and kettle-holders up enormously. From being things that one could acquire at an outlay of a few pence (they might at one time even have been thrown in as a sort of make-weight, in conjunction with more important purchases), they cannot now be secured under truly "fancy" prices. Every-one is on the look-out for them. Everyone is paying through the nose for them. But there are some folk too lazy or too dubious as to their own powers of discrimination to collect on their own account. They prefer to have their collecting ready done for them, to buy their collections right out in one fell



"The dealer brings a client, who sees the picture in its family surroundings."

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Tricks of the Trade

the sales lady with his confiding protégée (it is usually of the feminine gender), goes through a great palaver of trying over any number of pianos (as if the make really so infallible, all examples would not be equally superb) and eventually alights upon a veritable pearl of an instrument. A pleasing little cheque from the makers passes later into his banking account.

Carpets, like pianos, present their fraudulent possibilities. The rage for good Oriental carpets has considerably reduced the legitimate sources of supply of late years. There remains in the East a very large residuum, however, of garishly-hued carpets, which look comparatively well for use in their native surroundings under a brilliant sky, but which accord but poorly with atmospheric conditions over here. Seeing that the demand for Oriental carpets is uncommonly large nowadays, it seems a pity that it should not be gratified, so what does some bright genius do but discover how, by means of an acid solution, to reduce the garish tints to nice subdued tones. It is a matter of indifference to him that the powerful caustic wash makes the rug brittle and harsh, doing away with all the suppleness of the wool, and entirely destroying its wearing qualities. The appearance of the rug is so attractive that one would scarcely dream of doubting it.

be hall marks of all professional teacher or performer. Nowhere is deliberate boosting practised with such success as in the piano trade. Professor So-and-So makes a practice of instructing his Society pupils on one maker's pianos only; Signor Such-and-Such of performing always upon another's. Each has his own following, anxious to walk in his footsteps and do as he does in musical matters. If only the Professor would be so very amiable as to take his pupil to the firm's salons and choose an instrument for her! It would be invaluable to have his advice on the matter! The Professor is prevailed upon to do so.



AND the moral of all this is: Let the collector, who collects for the sake of kudos rather than for pure æsthetic pleasure, spend his leisure as far as possible among the works of art of all kinds in our galleries and museums. For in the direct study of what is genuinely old and beautiful can the taste and instinct be best cultivated. For just as a mind which for long has been fed on what is best and purest in literature can eventually suffer nothing that is banal or commonplace, so the eye that has been trained to appreciate the finest in art will instinctively reject that which is unworthy. For what goes by that misleading name of " flair " is nothing more than the natural feeling for art, fostered and developed by the study and contemplation of the best legacy that preceding generations of beauty-lovers have passed down to us.

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The MAN WHO WOULD NOT PLAY CARDS

By "SAPPER" (H.C.McNEILE)

I.

"THANKS very much, but as I told you before—I don't play cards."

The speaker, a tall, bronzed man whose clear eye and slightly weather-beaten face proclaimed him to be no dweller in cities, paused at the smoking-room door, and stared, a little deliberately, at the man who had just accosted him. It was the second time that day that this same gentleman had endeavoured to rope him into a game of poker—'just small stakes, you know"—and Hugh Massingham disliked being asked things twice. Almost as much as, in this particular case, he disliked the appearance of the asker.

He paused long enough to let the stare become pointed; then he opened the door and stepped out on deck. He hated the stuffiness of the smoking-room, with its eternal cards and whisky pegs, and with an atmosphere so thick with tobacco smoke that at times he could hardly see across it.

Away to port, like a faint smudge on the horizon, lay the North Coast of Africa, and Hugh Massingham, with a faint smile, wondered just how many times he'd seen that smudge before. And how many times he'd see it in the future.

He leaned over the rail staring at the water thoughtfully. It depended, of course, on Delia. Things are apt to depend on a man's wife. There was no necessity for him to go back to the East—no financial necessity—yet somehow he hoped Delia would like to come, at any rate, for a few years. England, from all he heard, didn't sound much of a place to live in just now, but, of course, she'd have to decide.

Surreptitiously he put a hand into his breast pocket and pulled out a photograph. It was the likeness of a woman—little more than a girl—with a pair of eyes that, even on the cardboard, mocked and haunted him. It was the likeness of a girl who was more than passing lovely; it was the likeness of his wife; a wife with whom he had spent his whole married life of one week. Involuntarily he smiled. A week together, out of four years. But if tactless Governments will conduct campaigns in Mesopotamia some such result is hardly to be wondered at.

He drew in a deep breath, and once again started to stroll up and down the deck. He wondered if she'd find him much changed: a bit thinner, perhaps, but enteric tends to remove superfluous flesh. And what would she be like? Grown a little—no longer a lovely girl, but a lovely woman. The photograph was nearly five years old, and she had been nineteen then—no, nearly twenty. A week out of four years—a week!

With a faint smile still on his lips, he turned and re-entered the smoking-room. The persuasive gentleman, he noticed, had settled down to his game of poker with four youngsters, and for a moment Massingham frowned. He knew the type—knew it inside out, and whoever might lose at that quiet game of poker there was one player who would certainly win. Not that he accused the persuasive gentleman for a moment of anything unfair; but he was of the type who had forgotten more about poker than the other four players combined were ever likely to know. With a slight shrug of his shoulders, he walked over to the bar and called for a gin and bitters. It was no business of his, and, from time immemorial, youth has had to pay for its experience.

It was about ten o'clock that night that it became increasingly evident that youth was paying with a vengeance. The persuasive gentleman had a very considerable proportion of the total number of chips beside him, to say nothing of a small library of written chits. And two of the other four players were looking worried, very worried. The thing was perfectly absurd; had they not played poker pretty consistently in the mess? Made a bit of money out of it, too, taking it in the long run. But to-

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night the luck was simply infernal. Hugh Massingham smiled grimly to himself. Truly, the lambs had walked docilely to the slaughter.

For a while he watched the persuasive gentleman narrowly through half-closed eyes; then, because it was still no business of his, he moved towards the door for a final stroll on deck before turning in. And it was as he was on the point of opening it that one of the youngsters rose suddenly with a muttered curse.

"I can't play any more," he said, shortly. "I'm holding the cards, but they always seem to go down."

Hugh smiled once again; it isn't the man who holds bad cards who loses heavily at poker; it's the man who holds good ones when somebody else is holding a bit better. Then something in the boy's face made his hand drop to his side; quite evidently he had lost more than he could comfortably afford. And the persuasive gentleman's complacent smirk made Hugh annoyed. He disliked the persuasive gentleman.

"Have your revenge to-morrow night," he remarked, with a kind of oily suavity, and with a grunt the youngster drained his whisky and soda sullenly.

"Won't someone else take his place?" As if by accident the speaker's eyes met Hugh's, and it may have been due to the procession of whiskies, or it may have been due to the fact that the dislike was reciprocal, but the persuasive gentleman allowed himself the pleasure of a very faint sneer. 'You, as you have told me twice, do not play, do you?"

It wasn't the words but it was the way they were said that decided Massingham. The persuasive gentleman should have his lesson.

"I don't mind taking this gentleman's place for half an hour," he remarked, quietly. "What stakes are you playing?"

"Maximum five-pound rise, and limit of a hundred in the pool," returned the other, and Hugh's eyebrows went up. He called those small stakes, did he?

For a while the game went on normally without any hands of importance, and it was not until they had been playing about twenty minutes that the cards became interesting. And that hand they were very interesting! It was Hugh's deal, and he dealt, as usual, slowly and methodically. The three youngsters threw their hands in at once; only the persuasive gentleman remained. And Hugh noted that the little finger of his left hand twitched slightly as he glanced at his cards.

"How many?" he demanded.

"One," said the other, and his voice was oily as ever.

"I stand," said Hugh, laying his cards face downwards on the table.

Then began the betting, and the youngster whose place he had taken watched eagerly in his excitement. They mounted a fiver at a time, until the persuasive gentleman reached the limit of a hundred.

"I'll see you at a hundred," drawled Hugh.

And a little gasp of envy ran round the spectators as the originator of the quiet game laid down four aces.

"You dealt 'em to me," he remarked with a smirk, his hand already stretched out to collar the pool.

"Er—one moment," murmured Hugh, and the persuasive gentleman turned white. Four aces. Only a straight flush could beat it. Surely——

Another gasp ran round the group. Hugh had just turned up his hand. And the three, four, five, six, and seven of clubs being a straight flush beats four aces.

For a moment Hugh allowed himself the luxury of watching the other's face. Then he spoke. "I certainly dealt you four aces, my friend; so I took the precaution of dealing myself a straight flush. And that is the reason why I do not play cards. Years of boredom by myself on a plantation made me take up card-conjuring as a hobby. And I did this simple little trick to-night in order to demonstrate to you boys that even a fine card-player like the gentleman opposite may be quite helpless when playing with a stranger. In fact, I could win money off him just as easily as he can win money off you."

The persuasive gentleman appeared to be the least pleased member of the group, though the fact that after all he had not lost his money appeased him somewhat.

"Anyone, sir," he remarked, a little thickly, "can win money by cheating."

"Not anyone," said Hugh, amicably. 'But we'll let that pass. Only I'd win money off you playing perfectly fair. You're not a good gambler; your finger twitches. Good night."

And he was still smiling as he turned in.

II.

WITH fingers that fumbled over the unaccustomed stiff shirt, Hugh Massingham was dressing for dinner. His first dinner with his wife for four years. It was the moment he had dreamed of through long, sweltering days in Mesopotamia—and now that it had come, he was afraid.

Things were different to what he had expected; Delia was different. He could hear her now, moving about in the next room, and her voice as she spoke to her maid. Somehow, he hadn't expected that maid.

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He had hoped—well, it didn't much matter what he'd hoped. Anyway, it was absurd: naturally, his wife would have a maid.

It wasn't that that made him pause every now and again and stare a little blankly in front of him; it was something far bigger and more fundamental than such a triviality as a maid. And even to himself he would hardly acknowledge what it was. She was shy—naturally, any woman would be after such a long separation. And then the idea of associating shyness with his singularly self-possessed and lovely wife made him smile grimly. It was not that. No, it was simply—and Hugh Massingham took a deep breath like a man about to dive—it was simply that she had become a stranger to him. Or, to put it more accurately, he had become a stranger to her. The kiss which she had given him had been such as a sister would give to her brother. True, there had not been much time—some people had arrived to play bridge and had remained most of the afternoon. Delia wouldn't hear of them going away, though they had half suggested it. And he had spent the afternoon at his club—the afternoon of which he'd dreamed through four long weary years. A stranger—he was a stranger in his own house. With a twisted apology for a smile, he put on his coat, and switched out the light. Time doubtless would straighten out the situation; but there had been enough time already in their married life. There had been four years.

Dinner, perfectly served and faultlessly cooked, merely continued the hollow mockery of his home-coming. He felt that he might have been dining with any pretty woman at any house; not with his wife in his own. In fact, except that he happened to pay for it, it wasn't his house. Everything about it was hers—except himself. He was merely the stranger within his own gates.

" A little different, Delia, to what I had imagined it," he remarked, quietly, as the servant, having placed the port in front of him, left the room.

For a moment she looked at him narrowly; then she leaned back in her chair.

" In what way? " she asked, calmly. " Don't you think the flat is comfortable? "

They had got to have a straight talk anyway; perhaps it was as well, she reflected, to get it over and done with. There was no good starting on false pretences.

" Very." He rose and stood by the fireplace looking down at her. " It wasn't the flat I was alluding to." With ostentatious deliberation he selected a cigarette and lit it. " Do you know it's four years since we've seen one another? "

" Quite strangers, aren't we? " she agreed, lightly.

" Exactly—the very word. Strangers. But through no wish of mine."

" Nor mine, either, my dear man. It's simply the inevitable result of four years' separation."

" I disagree; the result is by no manner of means inevitable. However, I won't press the point. But was it absolutely essential that those people should have stopped to bridge this afternoon? They had the decency to suggest going."

It was not a happy way of putting it, and a red spot burned for a moment on his wife's cheek.

" And I had not the decency to let them, you imply." She laughed a little shortly. " Well, since you've started this conversation, I suppose we may as well have it out."

Hugh's hand clenched suddenly behind his back, and he stood very still. A little dully, he wondered what was coming.

" I can only hope that you will be sensible and try and look at the matter from all points of view." She, too, lit a cigarette, and stared at him deliberately. " In the first place, I suppose I've changed—considerably. And in order to save any misunderstanding, it's just as well that we should both know where we stand."

" You mean you don't love me any more? " said her husband, slowly.

" Don't be ridiculous," she cried. " I never said anything of the sort. I'm very fond of you. But——" she stirred a little restlessly in her chair. " I've never believed, as you know, in beating about the bush, and there is another man whom I'm very fond of, too."

The dull, sickening blow, which well-nigh stunned him mentally, showed not at all on Hugh Massingham's face.

" One can't help these things," continued his wife, gravely, " and I think you'll agree that it is best for everybody to discuss matters as they are—rather than go on living as if they were otherwise."

" Quite," he murmured, grimly. " Please go on."

" We need neither of us insult our intelligences by regarding the matter in the light that our fathers and mothers would have looked at it. The fact that a married woman falls in love with a man who is not her husband is not a thing to hold up hands of pious horror at—or so it seems to me; it is just a thing which has happened, and if one is sensible, the best course is to see the most satisfactory way out for all concerned. Don't you agree? "

" Your argument certainly has its points," concurred Hugh. Great heavens! was this conversation real, or was he dreaming?

" Jimmy Staunton has kissed me—but that's all."

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His wife was speaking again, and he listened dully

"Jimmy Staunton! Is that the man's name?"

He threw his cigarette, long gone out, into the grate.

"Yes—that is the man. He's been asking me for months to go away with him, but I've refused. I didn't tell him why, but I'm going to tell you now. I wouldn't go until you'd come home, and I'd seen you again, and made sure—that——" She hesitated, and the man laughed grimly.

"Made sure that you really did love Mr. Jimmy Staunton more than me! Dreadful thing to make a second mistake."

"Put it that way, if you like," she answered quietly. "Though it wasn't from quite such baldly selfish motives that I refused to go with him. I tried, Hugh, to argue the thing out as best I could; I tried to be fair to him and to you. I realized that I might be wrong—that I didn't really love him——" the man by the fireplace made a quick, convulsive movement, "and anyway I realized that I must give you a chance if you want to have it. If, after what I've told you, you decide to let me go—well and good; we can arrange details easily. If, on the other hand, you refuse, and in the course of a month, say, I find that I was not mistaken, and that I'm fonder of Jimmy than I am of you, then, well, I shall have to take the law into my own hands."

Hugh Massingham laughed shortly.

"I see," he answered. "You have put things very clearly." He turned on her with an expressionless face. "I take it, then, that as matters stand at present, I am on trial."

"If you wish," she said. "I realize that you have a perfect right to refuse that trial, and tell me to go; but, after all your goodness to me, I could not do less than offer it to you."

"Your generosity touches me," he remarked, grimly. "And——"

It was at that moment that the servant opened the door and announced: "Mr. Staunton."

"Are you coming to Hector's, Delia?"

An immaculately-clad young man entered, with his evening overcoat on his arm and a top-hat in his hand, to stop in momentary confusion on seeing Hugh.

"I beg your pardon," he muttered. "I—er——"

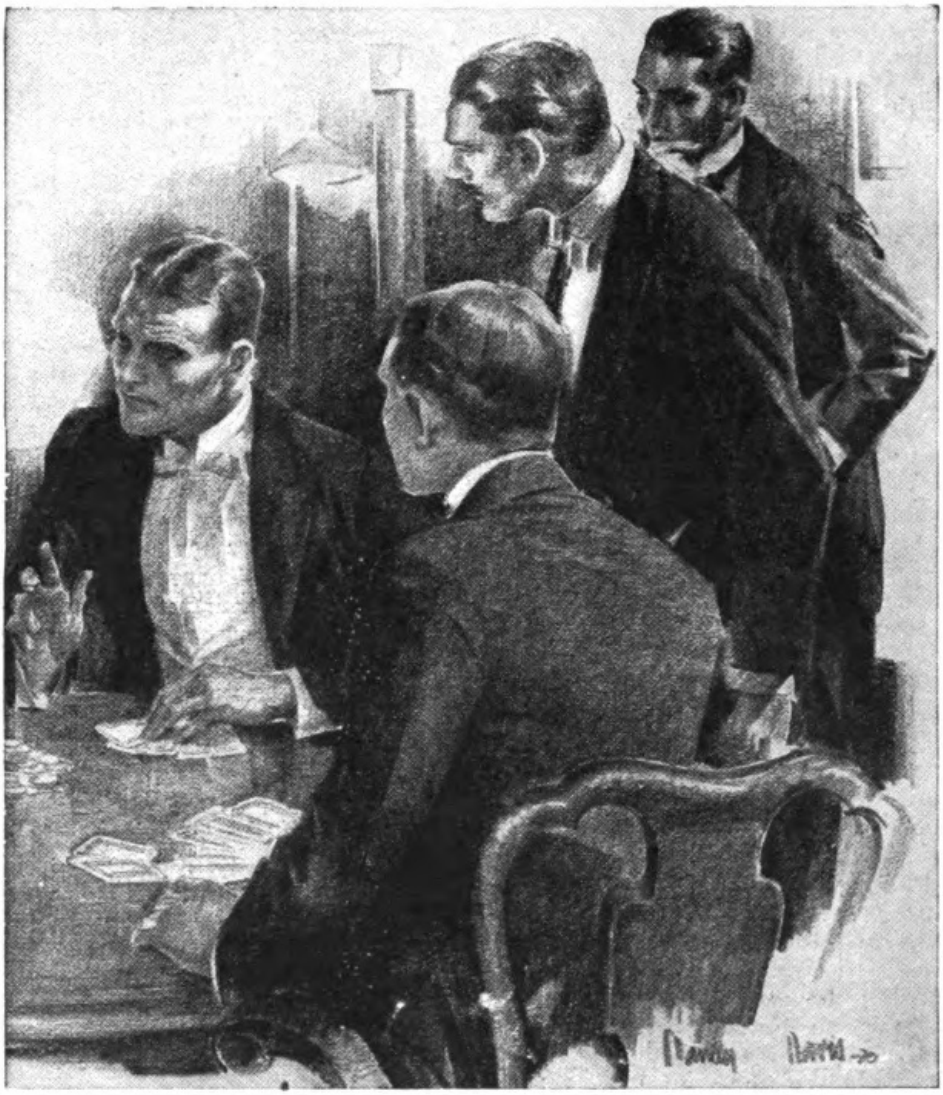
"This is my husband, Jimmy," said Delia, composedly, and the two men bowed.



"'Anyone, sir,' remarked the persuasive gentleman, 'can win money by

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"My wife was just talking about you, Mr. Staunton," said Hugh, impassively, while he took in every detail of the other's face—the mouth, well-formed, but inclined to weakness; the eyes that failed to meet his for a moment his eyes and Delia's met. Then with a faint shrug she stood up. "Four years in Mesopotamia do not improve one's dancing." He strolled to the door. "I shall wander round to the club, my dear," he murmured. "And, by the way, with regard to your offer, I accept it."



cheating!' 'Not anyone,' said Hugh, amicably. 'But we'll let that pass.'"

"Good Lord, darling!" whispered Staunton, as the door closed. "I'd got no idea he'd come back. What an awful break!"

But she was staring at the door, and seemed not to hear his remark. It was only as he kissed her that she came back to the reality of his presence.

"Let's go and dance, Jimmy," she said, feverishly. "I feel like—dancing to-night."

own; the hands, beautifully manicured, which twitched uneasily as they played with his white scarf.

Good God! This effeminate clothes-peg! To be on trial against—this! He stifled a contemptuous laugh; there was Delia to be considered.

"Pray don't let me detain you from Hector's; though I'm not quite certain what it is."

"A night-club, Mr. Massingham," said the other, nervously. "But perhaps Mrs. Massingham would prefer not to go this evening?"

"I am convinced my wife would prefer nothing of the sort," returned Hugh, and

III.

"HALLOA, Hugh! Got back, have you?"

The words greeted Massingham as he strolled through the club smoking-room in search of a seat, and with a start he looked at the speaker. So engrossed had he been in his own thoughts that he had failed to notice his brother-in-law, John Ferrers, till he was right on top of him.

"Yes, John—back," he said, slowly. "Back to-day—after four years."

Ferrers grunted and leaned over to pull up a chair. Something wrong—quite obviously. A man doesn't come to his club on the first evening home after four years, under normal circumstances.

"Have a drink!" Ferrers beckoned a waiter and gave the order. "How do you think Delia is looking?"

"Very well," said Hugh, quietly. "Very

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well indeed. She has gone off to a place called Hector's to-night."

Ferrers paused in the act of lighting his pipe, and looked at him in mild amazement. "Delia gone to Hector's to-night! What the devil has she done that for?"

"A gentleman of the name of Staunton —Jimmy Staunton—arrived in his glad rags after dinner," remarked Hugh. "She went to Hector's with him—I came here.'

"Young Staunton!" muttered Ferrers. "I didn't know——" He looked quickly at Hugh; then he resumed lighting his pipe. "If I were you, Hugh,—of course I know it's not my business—but if I were you I wouldn't let Delia go about too much with young Staunton. He's a—well, he's a useless young puppy to begin with, and his reputation is nothing to write home about in addition."

"Ah! is that so?" Hugh lay back in his chair and stared at his brother-in-law. "I had already classed him as a puppy—but I didn't think he was big enough to have a reputation of any kind —good or bad."

"My dear fellow—he's young, he's good-looking, and he's sufficiently well off to be able to do nothing. Also I believe he dances perfectly. Whether it's those assets, or whether it's something which the vulgar masculine eye is unable to appreciate, I can't tell you. But I do know this: that three ordinary, decent, sensible young married women of my acquaintance have made the most infernal fools of themselves over that youth." John Ferrers shook his head. "I'm hanged if I know what it is. It must be the war or something. But a lot of these girls seem to have gone completely off the rails."

He sighed ponderously; he was a good-hearted individual, was John Ferrers, but anything which deviated from his idea of the normal generally called forth a mild outburst. And he was very fond of his sister.

But really it wasn't quite the thing to go barging off to a night-club the day your husband returned after four years. Especially with young Staunton. It came back to his mind now, as he sat there pulling at his pipe, that off and on he had seen her about with the fellow; in the park, and twice at a theatre. Also having supper once at the Ritz, and two or three times at dinner. Of course there was nothing in it, but—still—confound it! the first night after four years.

"Are you going to take Delia out East with you, old boy?"

"That depends, John, on a variety of circumstances," remarked Hugh, quietly.

"I would if I were you," grunted the other. "It's been lonely for her, you know, and——" He became very interested in his pipe. "I wouldn't take too much notice of that young ass. Delia is far too sensible a girl to make a fool of herself over any man—let alone Staunton. But," and John Ferrers drained his glass decisively, "the next time I see her, I shall tell her a few home truths."

"Oh, no, John!" said Hugh, "you won't. I don't want you to allude to the matter at all. But I want you to tell me one thing. In those three cases you mentioned, did any question of divorce come up?"

"Divorce!" John Ferrers sat up in his chair abruptly. "What the deuce are you talking about?"

"The three cases you were speaking of," returned Hugh, imperturbably. "What manner of man is this Staunton, if things pass the dallying stage and come to a head?"

"Oh!" His brother-in-law sat back, relieved. "I can't tell you more than that Mr. James Staunton does not strike me as the type who would ever face the music. While he can take his pleasure with other men's wives, I don't think he has any intention of providing himself with one of his own."

"That was my diagnosis of his character," said Hugh. "I'm glad you confirm it."

John Ferrers rose as another member came up.

"Will you join us, Hugh? Snooker."

"No, thanks, old boy. Not to-night. So long."

With a faint smile he watched his worthy brother-in-law as he crossed the room. Then, having ordered another drink, he lay back in his chair and closed his eyes. And it was not till an hour later that he rose and wrote a short letter to a certain firm of shipping agents. Then he left the club, with the look on his face of a man who had made up his mind.

IV.

IT was Hugh himself who opened the door of the flat at two o'clock in the morning and let in his wife. Staunton was standing behind her on the landing, and Hugh nodded to him.

"Had a good time?" he asked, genially, standing aside to let Delia in. "Come in, Mr. Staunton, and have a nightcap before you go. No? Really, I insist."

Gently but firmly he propelled his reluctant guest towards the dining-room. The last thing which Mr. James Staunton wanted was a drink in his present surroundings. In fact, Mr. James Staunton wanted more than words can express to retire to his lonely bachelor couch, where he could

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"Come in, Mr. Staunton, and have a nightcap before you go. No? Really, I insist."

meditate at leisure on how best to extricate himself from a situation which had suddenly ceased to appeal to his somewhat peculiar sense of humour. Really he had credited Delia with a little more knowledge of the rules of the game. For months he'd been suggesting that there were possibilities by the sad sea waves at a delightful little fishing village down in Cornwall; or if that was too far afield he knew of a charming little hotel on the upper reaches of the Thames. In fact, the whole of his vast experience in such matters would have been at her disposal, and for no rhyme or reason, so far as he could see, she had continually refused his suggestion. And he was not used to being refused. Up to a point, of course, a little coyness and hesitation was delightful; but pushed to an extreme it became tedious. And then, to cap everything, on the very night when this large and somewhat uncouth-looking husband had returned from the back of beyond, Delia had become serious.

Hector's had not been a success; though he had manfully tried to be his own bright self. But there had been long silences—rather awkward silences—when he had been conscious that Delia was studying him—almost as if he was a stranger to her. And since he had an uneasy suspicion that he had not altogether shone during his meeting

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with her husband, he had found things increasingly difficult as the evening wore on.

"Say when, Mr. Staunton." Massingham was pouring some whisky into a glass, and he stepped up to the table.

"That's enough, thanks. Yes, soda, please. And then I must be off."

"The night is yet young," said his host, "And I rather want to have a talk with you, Mr. Staunton."

The youngster looked up quickly at the words; then he glanced at Delia, who was staring at her husband with a slight frown.

"Rather late, isn't it?" he murmured.

Massingham smiled genially. 'Two—late! You surprise me, Mr. Staunton. I thought that was about the time some of you people started to live." He splashed some soda into his own glass. "It's about my wife—about Delia. Absurd to call her anything but Delia to you, isn't it? I mean, we three need not stand on formality."

Staunton stiffened slightly; then, because he was painfully aware that his hands were beginning to tremble, he put them in his pockets.

"Really, Mr. Massingham," he laughed slightly, "you're very kind." Surely to Heaven she hadn't told her husband—anything.

"Not at all," returned Hugh. "Not at all, my dear fellow. It is absurd—as you said yourself, my dear, earlier in the evening—for us to become in any way agitated or annoyed over an unfortunate but very natural occurrence. And I consider it very natural, Staunton, that you should have fallen in love with my wife. I regard it in many respects as a compliment to myself."

His eyes were fixed steadily on the other's face, and a wave of contemptuous disgust surged up in him, though outwardly he gave no sign. The pitiful indecision of this king of lady-killers: the weak mouth, loose and twitching—surely Delia could see for herself what manner of thing it was. But his wife was sitting motionless, staring in front of her, and gave no sign.

"I—er, really," stammered Staunton.

"Don't apologize, my dear fellow—don't apologize. As I said, it's a most natural thing, and though this discussion may seem at first sight a trifle bizarre, yet if you think it over it's much the best manner of dealing with the situation."

"Er—quite."

Staunton shifted uneasily on his feet, and endeavoured feverishly to regain his self-control. Of course, the whole thing was farcical and Gilbertian; at the same time, just at the moment it appeared remarkably real. And he couldn't make up his mind how to take this large, imperturbable man.

"I told my husband, Jimmy," said Delia, speaking for the first time, "that we were in love with one another—and that you'd asked me to go away with you."

With intense amusement Hugh watched Staunton's jaw drop, though his wife, still staring in front of her, noticed nothing.

"Most kind of you," remarked Hugh, affably, and Delia looked at him quickly. "Most flattering. But my wife apparently decided that it wouldn't be quite fair to me—so she waited till I came home. And now I'm on trial—so to speak."

Staunton sat down in a chair; his legs felt strangely weak.

"The trouble is," continued Hugh, "that circumstances have arisen only to-night which prevent me standing on trial. I found a letter waiting for me at my club which necessitates my return to the East at once—probably for a year."

"By Jove—really!" Staunton sat up; the situation looked a little brighter.

"Going East at once?" Delia was staring at him puzzled.

"I'm afraid I must," returned her husband. "And so it makes things a little awkward, doesn't it? You see, Mr. Staunton, my wife's proposal was this. If after a few weeks of my presence she still found that she preferred you to me, she was going to tell me so straight out. Then—since, as I think you will agree, a woman must always be a man's first consideration—I would have effaced myself, gone through the necessary formalities to allow her to divorce me, and left her free to marry you. If, on the other hand, she had found that after all she could not return your devotion—well, we should then have gone on as we are. Perhaps not exactly the Church's idea of morality—but for all that, very fair. Don't you agree?"

Staunton nodded; speech was beyond his power.

"Now," continued Hugh, lighting a cigarette, "this sudden necessity for me to go East has upset her plan. I can't wait for those few weeks of test, and so we are confronted with a difficulty. I feel that it is not fair to keep her from you for a year or possibly longer; on the other hand, I feel that it is rather hard luck on me to relinquish her without a struggle. You said, Mr. Staunton? Sorry; I thought you spoke." He flicked the ash off his cigarette, and, crossing the room, he opened a bureau on the other side. "And so I've evolved a plan," he remarked, coming back again with a pack of cards in his hand. "A time-honoured method of settling things where there are two alternatives, and one which I suggest can be used with advantage here. We will each cut a card, Mr. Staunton. If I win, Delia comes East with me, on the clear understanding, my dear, that you may

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leave me at any moment and return to Mr. Staunton. I wouldn't like you to think for an instant that I am proposing to deprive you of your absolute free will whichever way the cards go. If I lose, on the other hand, I go East alone, and the necessary information to enable you to institute divorce proceedings will be sent you as soon as possible."

HIS wife rose quickly, and stood in front of him. "I'll come East with you, Hugh—anyway, for a time. It's only fair."

"Quite," agreed Staunton. "It's only fair."

"Not at all," remarked Massingham, decidedly. "I wouldn't dream of accepting such a sacrifice. It's a totally different matter if I win it at cards: then I shall hold you to it. Otherwise I go East alone. I have, I think, a certain say in the matter, and my mind is made up."

He turned to Staunton, who was staring at him open-mouthed: then he glanced at Delia, and she, for the first time, was looking at Jimmy Staunton.

"I suppose," he remarked, suddenly, "that I'm not making any mistake? You do wish to marry Delia, don't you, Mr. Staunton?"

For a moment that gentleman seemed to find difficulty in speaking. Then—"Of course," he muttered. "Of course."

"Good!" said Massingham. "Then we'll cut. Ace low—low wins."

He put the pack on a small table by the other man: then he turned away.

"Cut—please."

"But Hugh," his wife laid her hand on his arm, "it's impossible—it's——"

"Not at all, Delia. It's all quite simple. Have you cut?"

"I've cut the King of Hearts." Staunton was standing up. "So it looks as if I lose." His voice seemed hardly to indicate that the blow had prostrated him.

Massingham turned round, while his wife's breath came sharply.

"It does—undoubtedly," he remarked. "Yes—mine's the two of clubs. So you come, Delia." He broke off abruptly, his eyes fixed on the chair in which Staunton had been sitting. The next moment he stepped forward and pulled a card from the crack between the seat and the side. "The ace of diamonds," he said slowly. "What is this card doing here? I don't quite understand, Mr. Staunton. Ace low—low wins—and the ace of diamonds in your chair. I didn't watch you cut—but did you not want to win?"

"I—I—don't know how it got there," stammered Staunton, foolishly. "I didn't put it there."

"Then one rather wonders who did," said Massingham, coldly. "It makes things a little difficult."

For a moment or two there was silence: then Delia spoke.

"On the contrary," she remarked, icily, "it seems to me to make them very easy. Good night, Mr. Staunton. I shall not be at home to you in future."

And when Hugh Massingham returned a few minutes later, having shown the speechless and semi-dazed Staunton the front door, his wife had gone to her room.

"Undoubtedly one rather wonders who did," he murmured to himself with a faint smile. "But I think—I think, it was a good idea."

V.

"IT was a sort of infatuation, Hugh. I can't explain it." With her arm through his—she hadn't quite found her sea-legs yet—they were walking slowly up and down the promenade deck of the liner.

He smiled gently.

"Doesn't need any explanation, darling," he answered. "It's happened before: it will happen again. There are quite a number of Mr. James Stauntons at large—more's the pity."

"I know," she said. "I know that. But somehow he seemed different."

"HE always does." For a while they continued their walk in silence. "Quite cured, little girl?"

"Quite, absolutely." She squeezed his arm. "I think I was well on the way to being cured, before—before he cheated. And that finished it."

"Ah!" Hugh stopped a moment to light a cigarette.

"It simply defeats me how, after all he said, he could have done such a thing."

"I wouldn't let it worry you, sweetheart. The matter is of little importance. Halloa! What do these people want?"

"Glad to see you about again, Mrs. Massingham." An officer in the Indian Army, returning from leave, and his wife came up. "Would you and your husband care to make up a four at bridge?"

"Would you, dear?" She turned to him, and Massingham smiled.

"You go, Delia. You'll be able to find a fourth, and you've walked enough. I never play cards, myself."

"What a refreshing individual," laughed the officer's wife. "Does it bore you?"

"Intensely," murmured Hugh. "And I'm such a bad player."

He watched his wife go away with them: then, leaning over the rail, he commenced to fill his pipe. Away to starboard like a faint smudge on the horizon lay the north coast of Africa: two days in front was Malta. And then—— Surreptitiously he put a hand into his breast pocket and pulled out a photograph. Yes: it had been a good idea.

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TO KISS - OR

THE KISSING-SCREEN.

WHAT DOCTORS SAY ABOUT IT.

DR. ROBERT BELL, F.R.F.P.S.,
Vice-President of the International Cancer Research Society.

No doubt kissing, as a testimony of affection of the right sort, is excusable when the kisser and the kissed are well known to each other and are also known to be healthy. But promiscuous kissing should be avoided as one would avoid taking poison, seeing it is liable, in many instances, to convey a poison in the shape of disease. Especially is it the duty of mothers and nurses to prevent babies being fondled and kissed by outsiders, and even by their intimate friends, if there is the least doubt of their being perfectly healthy persons. For it goes without saying that disease may readily be, and doubtless is, not infrequently conveyed to infants by the rapturous mode of giving expression to pseudo-affection.

As for kissing dogs and cats, from my standpoint it is most revolting, even though it may prove innocuous, which it rarely is; for they are known to be frequent carriers of disease germs in their fur. Moreover, the vermin with which they are more or less infested also are disease-carriers. Therefore children, who, as a rule, are fond of animals, should be forbidden to fondle them.

I heartily sympathize with the views of the famous French physician, Dr. Romme, regarding the dangerous results of kissing, especially cats and dogs, and also of indiscriminate kissing of babies by strangers.

DR. ROBERTSON WALLACE, C.M.

While it is probably too late in the day to attempt, with any degree of success, to eradicate a habit which appears to have become ingrained in human nature throughout the larger part of the civilized world, the custom of absolutely indiscriminate osculation should be sternly discountenanced. It is certainly "asking for trouble" for anyone to kiss or be kissed by a stranger whose medical history may not be altogether above suspicion. Babies and young children undoubtedly run considerable risk from this source, since they are always considered fair game by persons of that highly emotional type which seems incapable of restraining itself from kissing anybody and everybody presenting an attractive appearance and incapable of resistance or expostulation. Such indiscriminate distributors of microbes will kiss babies, dogs, cats, or canaries with an impartial gusto worthy of a better cause, and, being themselves probably robust and immune to infective disease in general, do not dream that they may be the cause of disease, and possibly death, of some of those humans whom they favour with their too-close attentions.

The hygiene of kissing appears to have received more serious study in America than in this country. There it is considered that the ideal labial salute should take the form of a pure and germless kiss. With this worthy object, a scientist has invented the kissing-screen, which might easily be used as a ping-pong racket in its idle moments. The netting is covered with an antiseptic guaranteed to kill all germs *en route*. The idea of the modern Romeo and Juliet protesting their affection through a device protecting them from infection is very American. In these latitudes, we fear, lovers will continue to take their pleasure gaily and naturally, rather than sadly and scientifically, both of those immediately concerned being no doubt satisfied that the only immediate risk they run is one of matrimony.

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NOT TO KISS?



DR. HARRY ROBERTS,
Lecturer on Analytic Chemistry, London University.

The value and significance of a kiss would undoubtedly be multiplied a thousandfold if it were made illegal. It may safely be said that not one kiss in a thousand has any biological excuse, and the messy habit of promiscuous kissing which obtains in some circles is as revolting as the casual marriages of the Tatoways (*see* Letourneau's "Evolution of Marriage").

Kissing between lovers is perfectly natural and entirely desirable. In a lesser degree the same is true of mother and infant. In the court of Æsthetics and Common Sense every other kiss should be a capital offence. All the customary kissing by actresses and aunts is merely silly, for generally it gives no pleasure to either party. To kiss a child against its will should certainly be a penal offence.

The campaign against kissing based on physically hygienic objections is all bunkum. I have an enormous medical practice. For more than twenty years I have seen an average of upwards of a hundred patients a day, and I have never yet seen a case of illness which could conceivably be traced to a kiss. Of course, no one but an imbecile would go out of his way to kiss a person suffering from one of those few infectious diseases known to be transmissible by contact of mucous membranes; but such cases are fortunately very much rarer than some of our scaremongers would have us believe.



The kissing-screen, which is the invention of an American scientist, and how it would be used.

Kissing through a kind of fly-bat, or miniature wire racket, has been advocated in America. This might suit some people, and the instrument might be carried like a lorgnette. Its use would not be unamusing to watch, and it would have a reasonably drying effect. Drought is notoriously stultifying to bacterial activity.

Personally, I am sure that, if kissing only took place between people who mutually desired it, no harm at all would result, either hygienic or æsthetic, except possibly in the imaginations of social reformers.

SIR MALCOLM MORRIS, K.C.V.O.,
The well-known authority on the prevention of tuberculosis and on skin diseases.

In the first place I should like to state that there is no cause for panic. To alarm people in regard to what is a recognized national custom is quite unnecessary.

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At the same time it is necessary to warn certain people of the dangers of indiscriminate kissing. So far as the customary domestic night and morning kiss is concerned, and which is usually quite perfunctory, there is little to be feared, unless there are colds and influenza in the house, when it is obvious to anyone's common sense that kissing should be discontinued.

There cannot be said to be any danger in the perfunctory family kiss—the peck on the cheek or forehead. It is the full kiss on the mouth which is dangerous, and which should be avoided by anyone who has any suspicion that the state of their mouth and general health is not what it ought to be.

DR. C. W. SALEEBY, F.R.S.E.,
The well-known Eugenist.

It has been statistically shown, notably at the great Foundlings Hospital in Moscow, that babies who are nursed by their own mothers die at, in general, half the rate of those who are nursed by foster mothers. In recent evidence before the National Birthrate Commission, Dr. Eric Pritchard has offered what I do not doubt to be a large part at least of the explanation of this remarkable fact. It is that a baby has received from its mother, before birth, some share of her own resistance to the germs which she harbours in her own nose and throat. Thus by a national dispensation she may, so long as she is well, suckle and fondle and kiss and talk in the face of *her own child* without danger to it. In round terms, therefore, and as a general principle, I will say that no one should kiss a baby, at any rate on the mouth, except its own mother.



"Kissing dogs is most revolting, for they are known to be frequent carriers of disease germs."

Evidently these arguments apply to children who are no longer babies.

Grown-up people who kiss one another are vastly less likely to convey disease—except in the numerous cases where one of them is actually suffering from diseases in their infectious stages.

DR. LEONARD WILLIAMS,
Late Editor "Medical Press and Circular."

Is kissing dangerous? Undoubtedly, if indulged in recklessly without consideration and thought of the contagion which it is possible to transmit. For children to be kissed on the mouth by anyone and everyone is criminal. No self-respecting mother or nurse would allow this. If osculatory affection must be shown, a kiss on the cheek, forehead, or hand is permissible, but not on the lips.

The fondling and kissing of pet dogs and cats is another crime against the laws of hygiene. That a woman after kissing a pet should greet her dearest friend with a kiss shows an utter disregard for the laws of health and common sense. And yet hundreds of women are committing this practice every day. It arises in most cases from a perverted maternal instinct, and women who so convey disease germs from animal to friend or relative would be far better out of the world.

Referring to kisses between adults—sweethearts, husbands and wives, and lady friends—the duty kiss delivered on the cheek or brow does not matter much. But what the French call *baiser en pleine bouche*—the full kiss on the mouth—should certainly be avoided by anyone who has reason to doubt the health of their mouth. I am afraid the satisfaction derived from osculatory practices with the kissing mask would not make the latter very popular. Furthermore, it would imply that there was danger in the mouth of the person who was being kissed and indignation, to say the least, would be aroused.

The man who smokes, however, is not so likely to convey any bad germs by kissing as the non-smoker. Smoking is a powerful antiseptic, and when indulged in moderately may not only be harmless, but probably has its advantages.

LORD DAWSON,
Physician-in-Ordinary to H.M. the King.

It is one of those occasions in life where I should be prepared to risk it.

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"DOING FATHER A BIT OF GOOD"

By

P. G. Wodehouse



ILLUSTRATED BY
A. WALLIS MILLS

IT was Parker, Mr. Brewster's English valet, who first directed Archie's attention to the hidden merits of Pongo. Archie had visited his father-in-law's suite one morning—not absolutely with the definite purpose of making a touch, but rather with the nebulous notion of getting into his relative's ribs for a few dollars if the latter seemed to be sufficiently cheery and full of the milk of human kindness—and he had found the sitting-room occupied only by the valet, who was dusting the furniture and bric-à-brac with a feather broom rather in the style of a man-servant at the rise of the curtain of an old-fashioned farce. After a courteous exchange of greetings, Archie sat down and lit a cigarette. Parker went on dusting.

"The guv'nor," said Parker, breaking the silence, "'as some nice little objay dar, sir."

"Little what?"

"Objay dar, sir."

Light dawned upon Archie.

"Of course, yes. French for junk. I know what you mean now. Dare say you're right, old friend. Don't know much about these things myself."

Parker gave an appreciative flick at a vase on the mantelpiece. His encomium had been quite justified. One of the things which made the Hotel Cosmopolis different from other New York hotels was the fact that its proprietor had an educated taste in matters of art. He had personally selected the tapestries in the dining-room and the various paintings throughout the hotel. And, in his private and personal capacity, he was an enthusiastic collector of things which Archie would not have been found dead in a ditch with. Archie's taste in art was not precious; and he found a difficulty in looking civilly at most of his father-in-law's belongings—notably his Japanese prints.

Parker had picked up a small china figure, and was grooming it with the ostentatious care of one brushing flies off a sleeping Venus. The figure was of very delicate workmanship, and represented a warrior of pre-khaki days advancing with a spear upon some adversary who, judging from the contented expression on the warrior's face, was smaller than himself. Parker regarded this figure with a look of affectionate admiration which seemed to Archie absolutely uncalled for. To Archie's untutored eye the thing was only one degree less foul than the Japanese prints.

"Very valuable, some of the guv'nor's things," said Parker. "This one, now. Worth a lot of money. Oh, a lot of money."

"What, Pongo?" said Archie, incredulously.

"Sir?"

"I always call that rummy-llooking little what-not Pongo. Don't know what else you could call him, what!"

The valet seemed to disapprove of this levity. He shook his head and replaced the figure on the mantelpiece.

"Worth a lot of money," he repeated. "Not by itself, no."

"Oh, not by itself?"

"No, sir. Things like this come in pairs. Somewhere or other there's the companion-piece to this 'ere, and if the guv'nor could get 'old of it, he'd 'ave something worth 'aving. Something that connoozers would give a lot of money for. But one's no good

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without the other. You 'ave to 'ave both, if you understand my meaning, sir."

"I see. Like filling a jolly old straight flush, what?"

"Precisely, sir."

Archie gazed at Pongo again, with the dim hope of discovering virtues not immediately apparent to the casual observer. But without success. Pongo left him cold—even chilly. He would not have taken Pongo as a gift, to oblige a dying friend.

"How much would the pair be worth?" he asked. "Ten dollars?"

Parker smiled a gravely superior smile. "A leetle more than that, sir. Several thousand dollars, more like it."

"Do you mean to say," said Archie, with honest amazement, "that there are chumps going about loose—absolutely loose—who would pay that for a weird little object like Pongo?"

"Undoubtedly, sir. These antique china figures are in great demand among collectors."

Archie looked at Pongo once more, and shook his head.

"Well, well, well! It takes all sorts to make a world, what!"

WHAT might be called the revival of Pongo, the restoration of Pongo to the ranks of the things that matter, took place several weeks later, when Archie was making holiday at the house which his father-in-law had taken for the summer at Brookport. The curtain of the second act may be said to rise on Archie strolling back from the golf-links in the cool of an August evening. From time to time he sang slightly, and wondered idly if Lucille, his wife, would put the finishing touch upon the all-rightness of everything by coming to meet him and sharing his homeward walk.

She came in view at this moment, a trim little figure in a white skirt and a pale blue sweater. She waved to Archie; and Archie, as always at the sight of her, was conscious of that jumpy, fluttering sensation about the heart, which, translated into words, would have formed the question, "What on earth could have made a girl like that fall in love with a chump like me?" It was a question which he was continually asking himself, and one which was perpetually in the mind also of Mr. Brewster, his father-in-law. The matter of Archie's unworthiness to be the husband of Lucille was practically the only one on which the two men saw eye to eye.

"Halloa-alloa-alloa!" said Archie. "Here we are, what! I was just hoping you would drift over the horizon."

Lucille kissed him.

"You're a darling," she said. "And you look like a Greek god in that suit."

"Glad you like it." Archie squinted with some complacency down his chest. "I always say it doesn't matter what you pay for a suit, so long as it's *right*. I hope your jolly old father will feel that way when he settles up for it."

"Where is father? Why didn't he come back with you?"

"Well, as a matter of fact, he didn't seem any too keen on my company. I left him in the locker-room chewing a cigar. Gave me the impression of having something on his mind."

"Oh, Archie! You didn't beat him *again?*"

Archie looked uncomfortable. He gazed out to sea with something of embarrassment.

"Well, as a matter of fact, old thing, to be absolutely frank, I, as it were, did!"

"Not badly?"

"Well, yes! I rather fancy I put it across him with some vim and not a little emphasis. To be perfectly accurate, I licked him by ten and eight."

"But you promised me you would let him beat you to-day. You know how pleased it would have made him."

"I know. But, light of my soul, have you any idea how dashed difficult it is to be beaten by your festive parent at golf?"

"Oh, well!" Lucille sighed. "It can't be helped, I suppose."

"Not while the old lad tosses his head, when making his shots, like the lion of the jungle scenting his prey."

"But I do wish we could think of some way of making father fonder of you."

"So do I. But what's one to do? I smile winsomely at him and what not, but he doesn't respond."

"Well, we shall have to try to think of something. I want him to realize what an angel you are." Lucille felt in the pocket of her sweater. "Oh, there's a letter for you. I've just been to fetch the mail. I don't know who it can be from. The handwriting looks like a vampire's. Kind of scrawly."

Archie inspected the envelope. It provided no solution.

"That's rummy! Who could be writing to me?"

"Open it and see."

"Dashed bright scheme! I will. Herbert Parker. Who the deuce is Herbert Parker?"

"Parker? Father's valet's name was Parker."

"And still is, no doubt, what! Do you mean the long, thin bird? The one he fired just before we came down here?"

"Yes. Father found he was wearing his shirts."

"Do you mean to say any reasonable

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chappie would willingly wear the sort of shirts your father——? I mean to say, there must have been some mistake."

"Do read the letter. I expect he wants to use your influence with father to have him taken back."

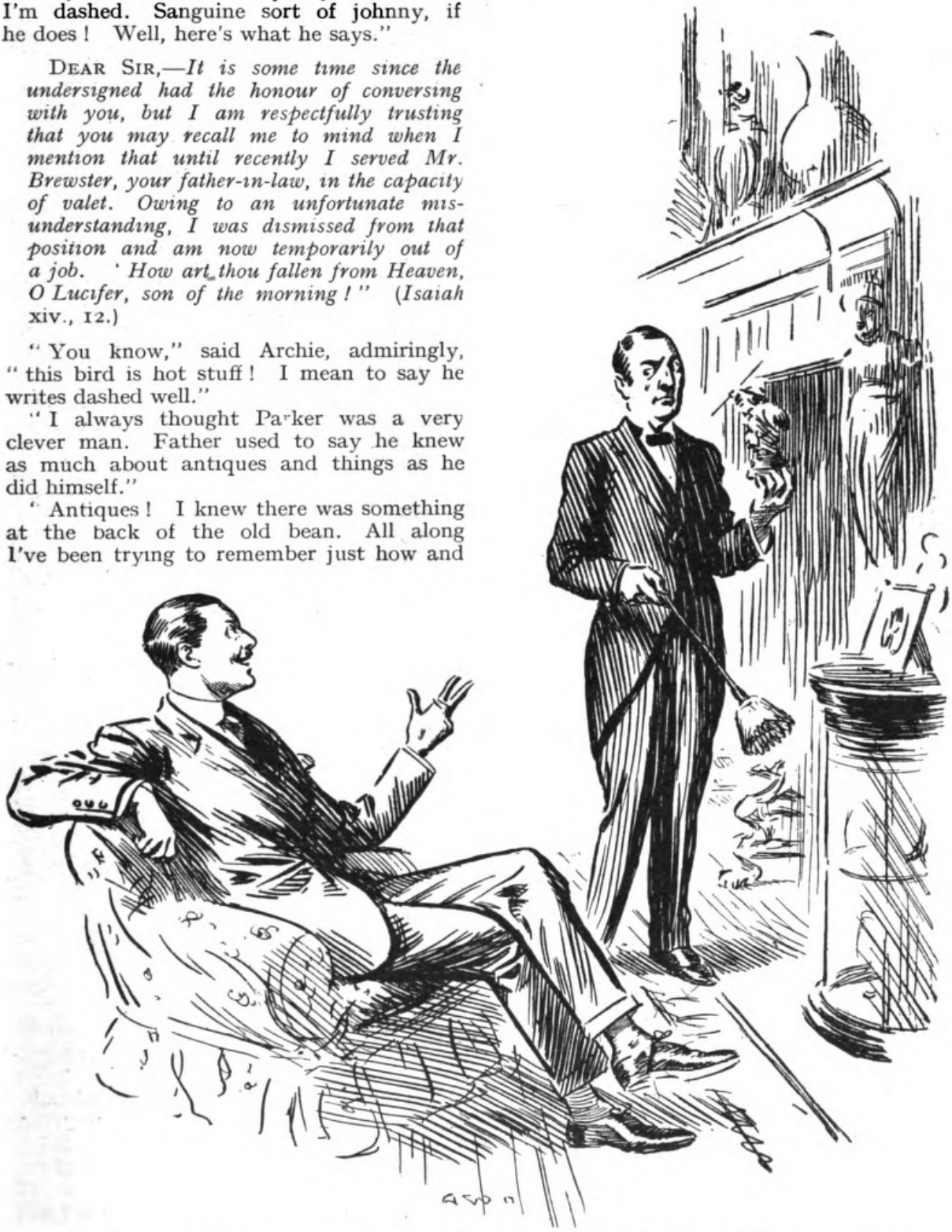
"*My* influence? With your *father?* Well, I'm dashed. Sanguine sort of johnny, if he does! Well, here's what he says."

> DEAR SIR,—*It is some time since the undersigned had the honour of conversing with you, but I am respectfully trusting that you may recall me to mind when I mention that until recently I served Mr. Brewster, your father-in-law, in the capacity of valet. Owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding, I was dismissed from that position and am now temporarily out of a job. 'How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!'* (*Isaiah* xiv., 12.)

"You know," said Archie, admiringly, "this bird is hot stuff! I mean to say he writes dashed well."

"I always thought Parker was a very clever man. Father used to say he knew as much about antiques and things as he did himself."

"Antiques! I knew there was something at the back of the old bean. All along I've been trying to remember just how and when it was that friend Parker and I became the good old college chums he seems to think we are. We had a long and animated talk one morning in your father's suite. He told me something dashed interesting, I recollect. I can't recall what it was, but



"'Very valuable, some of the guv'nor's things,' said Parker. 'This one, now. Worth a lot of money.'"

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I know it struck me as dashed interesting. Well, let's get on with it."

It is not, however, with my own affairs that I desire to trouble you, dear sir. I have little doubt that all will be well with me and that I shall not fall like a sparrow to the ground. "I have been young and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." (*Psalms* xxxvii., 25.) *My object in writing to you is as follows. You may recall that I had the pleasure of meeting you one morning in Mr. Brewster's suite, when we had an interesting talk on the subject of Mr. B.'s objets d'art. You may recall being particularly interested in a small china figure. To assist your memory, the figure to which I allude is the one which you whimsically referred to as Pongo. I informed you, if you remember, that, could the accompanying figure be secured, the pair would be extremely valuable.*

I am glad to say, dear sir, that this has now transpired, and is on view at Beale's Art Galleries on West Forty-Fifty Street, where it will be sold to-morrow at auction, the sale commencing at two-thirty sharp. If Mr. Brewster cares to attend, he will, I fancy, have little trouble in securing it at a reasonable price. I confess that I had thought of refraining from apprising my late employer of this matter, but more Christian feelings have prevailed. "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." (*Romans* xii., 20.) *Nor, I must confess, am I altogether uninfluenced by the thought that my action in this matter may conceivably lead to Mr. B. consenting to forget the past and to reinstate me in my former position. However, I am confident that I can leave this to his good feeling.*

I remain, respectfully yours,
HERBERT PARKER.

Lucille clapped her hands.

"How splendid! Father *will* be pleased!"

"Yes. Friend Parker has certainly found a way to make the old lad fond of him. Wish *I* could!"

"But you can, silly! He'll be delighted when you show him that letter."

"Yes, with Parker. Old Herb. Parker's is the neck he'll fall on—not mine."

Lucille reflected.

"I wish——" she began. She stopped. Her eyes lit up. "Oh, Archie, darling, I've got an idea!"

"Decant it."

"Why don't you slip up to New York to-morrow and buy the thing, and give it to father as a surprise?"

Archie patted her hand kindly. He hated to spoil her girlish day-dreams.

"Yes," he said. "But reflect, queen of my heart! I have at the moment of going to press just two dollars fifty in specie, which I took off your father this afternoon. We were playing twenty-five cents a hole. He coughed it up without enthusiasm—in fact, with a nasty hacking sound—but I've got it. But that's all I have got."

"That's all right. You can pawn that ring and that bracelet of mine."

Oh, I say, what! Popping the family jewels?"

"Only for a day or two. Of course, once you've got the thing, father will pay us back. He would give you all the money we asked him for, if he knew what it was for. But I want to surprise him. And if you were to go to him and ask him for a thousand dollars without telling him what it was for, he might refuse."

"He might!" said Archie. "He might!"

"It all works out splendidly. To-morrow's the Invitation Handicap, and father's been looking forward to it for weeks. He'd hate to have to go up to town himself and not play in it. But you can slip up and slip back without his knowing anything about it."

Archie pondered.

It sounds a ripe scheme. Yes, it has all the ear-marks of a somewhat fruity wheeze! By Jove, it *is* a fruity wheeze! It's an egg!"

"An egg?"

"Good egg, you know. Halloa, here's a postscript. I didn't see it."

P.S.—I should be glad if you would convey my most cordial respects to Mrs. Moffam. Will you also inform her that I chanced to meet Mr. William this morning on Broadway, just off the boat. He desired me to send his regards and to say that he would be joining you at Brookport in the course of a day or so. Mr. B. will be pleased to have him back. "A wise son maketh a glad father." (*Proverbs x.*, 1.)

"Who's Mr. William?" asked Archie.

"My brother Bill, of course. I've told you all about him."

"Oh, yes, of course. Your brother Bill. Rummy to think I've got a brother-in-law I've never seen."

"You see, we married so suddenly. When we married, Bill was in Yale."

"Good God! What for?"

"Not jail, silly. Yale. The university."

"Oh, ah, yes."

"Then he went over to Europe for a trip to broaden his mind. You must look him up to-morrow when you get back to New York. He's sure to be at his club."

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"I'll make a point of it. Well, vote of thanks to jolly old Parker! This really does begin to look like the point in my career where I start to have your forbidding old parent eating out of my hand."

"Yes, it's an egg, isn't it?"

"It's an omelette!" said Archie, enthusiastically.

The business negotiations in connection with the bracelet and the ring occupied Archie on his arrival in New York to an extent which made it impossible for him to call on Brother Bill before lunch; and the fact that his friend Reggie van Tuyl happened to join him at the table prolonged lunch till a few minutes before the time scheduled for the opening of the sale. Archie decided to postpone the affecting meeting of brothers-in-law to a more convenient season.

"I say, Reggie, old top," he said, confiding in his friend, "do you know anything about sales?"

"Sales?"

"Auction sales, don't you know."



"Halloa, here's a postscript. I didn't see it."

Reginald considered. He was a long youth with a rather subdued and deflated look, as though the burden of the Van Tuyl millions was more than his frail strength could support. Most things tired him.

"Well," he yawned. "They're sales, you know. Auction sales, you understand."

"Yes," said Archie, encouragingly. "Something—the name or something—seemed to tell me that."

"Fellows put things up for sale, you know, and other fellows—other fellows go in and—and buy 'em, if you follow me."

Archie sought further enlightenment.

"Yes, but what's the jolly old procedure? I mean what do I do? I've got to buy something at Beale's this afternoon. How do I set about it?"

"Well," said Reggie, drowsily, "there are several ways of bidding, you know. You can shout, or you can nod, or you can twiddle your fingers——" The effort of concentration was too much for him. He leaned back limply in his chair. "I'll tell you what. I've nothing to do this afternoon. I'll come with you and show you."

When he entered the Art Galleries a few minutes later, Archie was glad of the moral support of even such a wobbly reed as Reggie van Tuyl. There is something about an auction room which weighs heavily upon the novice. The hushed interior was bathed in a dim, religious light; and the congregation, seated on small wooden chairs, gazed in reverent silence at the pulpit, where a gentleman of commanding presence and sparkling pince-nez was delivering a species of chant. Behind a gold curtain at the end of the room mysterious forms flitted to and fro. Archie, who had been expecting something on the lines of the New York Stock Exchange, which he had once been privileged to visit when it was in a more than usually feverish mood, found the atmosphere oppressively ecclesiastical. He sat down and looked about him. The presiding priest went on with his chant.

"Sixteen-sixteen-sixteen-sixteen-sixteen—worth three hundred—sixteen-sixteen-sixteen sixteen-sixteen—ought to bring five hundred—sixteen-sixteen-seventeen - seventeen - eighteen-eighteen - nineteen - nineteen - nineteen." He stopped and eyed the worshippers with a glittering and reproachful eye. They had, it seemed, disappointed him. His lips curled, and he waved a hand towards

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a grimly uncomfortable-looking chair with insecure legs and a good deal of gold paint about it. "Gentlemen! Ladies and gentlemen! You are not here to waste my time; I am not here to waste yours. Am I seriously offered nineteen dollars for this eighteenth-century chair, acknowledged to be the finest piece sold in New York for months and months? Am I—twenty? I thank you. Twenty-twenty-twenty-twenty. *Your* opportunity! Priceless. Very few extant. Twenty-five-five-five-thirty-thirty-thirty. Just what you are looking for. The only one in the City of New York. Thirty-five-five-five-five. Forty-forty-forty-forty-forty. Look at those legs! Back it into the light, Willie. Let the light fall on those legs!"

Willie, a sort of acolyte, manœuvred the chair as directed. Reggie van Tuyl, who had been yawning in a hopeless sort of way, showed his first flicker of interest.

"Willie," he observed, eyeing that youth more with pity than reproach, "has a face like Jo-Jo the Dog-Faced Boy, don't you think so?"

Archie nodded briefly. Precisely the same criticism had occurred to him.

"Forty-five-five-five-five-five," chanted the high priest. "Once forty-five. Twice forty-five. Third and last call, forty-five. Sold at forty-five. Gentleman in the fifth row."

Archie looked up and down the row with a keen eye. He was anxious to see who had been chump enough to give forty-five dollars for such a frightful object. He became aware of the dog-faced Willie leaning towards him.

"Name, please?" said the canine one.

"Eh, what?" said Archie. "Oh, my name's Moffam, don't you know." The eyes of the multitude made him feel a little nervous. "Er—glad to meet you and all that sort of rot."

"Ten dollars deposit, please," said Willie.

"I don't absolutely follow you, old bean. What is the big thought at the back of all this?"

"Ten dollars deposit on the chair."

"What chair?"

"You bid forty-five dollars for the chair."

"Me?"

"You nodded," said Willie, accusingly. "If," he went on, reasoning closely, "you didn't want to bid, why did you nod?"

Archie was embarrassed. He could, of course, have pointed out that he had merely nodded in adhesion to the statement that the other had a face like Jo-Jo the Dog-Faced Boy; but something seemed to tell him that a purist might consider the excuse deficient in tact. He hesitated a moment, then handed over a ten-dollar bill, the price of Willie's feelings. Willie withdrew like a tiger slinking from the body of its victim.

"I say, old thing," said Archie to Reggie, "this is a bit thick, you know. No purse will stand this drain."

Reggie considered the matter. His face seemed drawn under the mental strain.

"Don't nod again," he advised. "If you aren't careful, you get into the habit of it. When you want to bid, just twiddle your fingers. Yes, that's the thing. Twiddle!"

He sighed drowsily. The atmosphere of the auction room was close; you weren't allowed to smoke; and altogether he was beginning to regret that he had come. The service continued. Objects of varying unattractiveness came and went, eulogized by the officiating priest, but coldly received by the congregation. Relations between the former and the latter were growing more and more distant. The congregation seemed to suspect the priest of having an ulterior motive in his eulogies, and the priest seemed to suspect the congregation of a frivolous desire to waste his time. He had begun to speculate openly as to why they were there at all. Once, when a particularly repellent statuette of a nude female with an unwholesome green skin had been offered at two dollars and had found no bidders—the congregation appearing silently grateful for his statement that it was the only specimen of its kind on the continent—he had specifically accused them of having come into the auction room merely with the purpose of sitting down and taking the weight off their feet.

"If your thing—your whatever-it-is, doesn't come up soon, Archie," said Reggie, fighting off with an effort the mists of sleep, "I rather think I shall be toddling along. What was it you came to get?"

"It's rather difficult to describe. It's a rummy-looking sort of what-not, made of china or something. I call it Pongo. At least, this one isn't Pongo, don't you know—it's his little brother, but presumably equally foul in every respect. It's all rather complicated, I know, but—halloa!" He pointed excitedly. "By Jove! We're off! There it is! Look! Willie's unleashing it now!"

Willie, who had disappeared through the gold curtain, had now returned, and was placing on a pedestal a small china figure of delicate workmanship. It was the figure of a warrior in a suit of armour advancing with raised spear upon an adversary. A thrill permeated Archie's frame. Parker had not been mistaken. This was undoubtedly the companion-figure to the redoubtable Pongo. The two were identical. Even from where he sat Archie could detect on the features of the figure on the pedestal the

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same expression of insufferable complacency which had alienated his sympathies from the original Pongo.

The high priest, undaunted by previous rebuffs, regarded the figure with a gloating enthusiasm wholly unshared by the congregation, who were plainly looking upon Pongo's little brother as just another of those things.

"This," he said, "with a shake in his voice, "is something very special. China figure, said to date back to the Ming Dynasty. Unique. Nothing like it on either side of the Atlantic. If I were selling this at Christie's in London, where people," he said, nastily, "have an educated appreciation of the beautiful, the rare, and the exquisite, I should start the bidding at a thousand dollars. This afternoon's experience has taught me that that might possibly be too high." His pince-nez sparkled militantly, as he gazed upon the stolid throng. "Will anyone offer me a dollar for this unique figure?"

"Leap at it, old top," said Reggie van Tuyl. "Twiddle, dear boy, twiddle! A dollar's reasonable."

Archie twiddled.

"One dollar I am offered," said the high priest, bitterly. 'One gentleman here is not afraid to take a chance. One gentleman here knows a good thing when he sees one." He abandoned the gently sarcastic manner for one of crisp and direct reproach. "Come, come, gentlemen, we are not here to waste time. Will anyone offer me one hundred dollars for this superb piece of——" He broke off, and seemed for a moment almost unnerved. He stared at someone in one of the seats in front of Archie. "Thank you," he said, with a sort of gulp. "One hundred dollars I am offered! One hundred—one hundred—one hundred——"

Archie was startled. This sudden, tremendous jump, this wholly unforeseen boom in Pongos, if one might so describe it, was more than a little disturbing. He could not see who his rival was, but it was evident that at least one among those present did not intend to allow Pongo's brother to slip by without a fight. He looked helplessly at Reggie for counsel, but Reggie had now definitely given up the struggle. Exhausted nature had done its utmost, and now he was leaning back with closed eyes, breathing softly through his nose. Thrown on his own resources, Archie could think of no better course than to twiddle his fingers again. He did so, and the high priest's chant took on a note of positive exuberance.

"Two hundred I am offered. Much better! Turn the pedestal round, Willie, and let them look at it. Slowly! Slowly! You aren't spinning a roulette-wheel. Two hundred. Two-two-two-two-two." He became suddenly lyrical. "Two-two-two—There was a young lady named Lou, who was catching a train at two-two. Said the porter, 'Don't worry or hurry or scurry. It's a minute or two to two-two!' Two-two-two-two-two!"

Archie's concern increased. He seemed to be twiddling at this voluble man across seas of misunderstanding. Nothing is harder to interpret to a nicety than a twiddle, and Archie's idea of the language of twiddles and the high priest's idea did not coincide by a mile. The high priest appeared to consider that, when Archie twiddled, it was his intention to bid in hundreds, whereas in fact Archie had meant to signify that he raised the previous bid by just one dollar. Archie felt that, if given time, he could make this clear to the high priest, but the latter gave him no time. He had got his audience, so to speak, on the run, and he proposed to hustle them before they could rally.

"Two hundred—two hundred—two—three—thank you, sir—three-three-three-four-four-five-five-six-six-seven-seven-seven———"

Archie sat limply in his wooden chair. He was conscious of a feeling which he had only experienced twice in his life—once when he had taken his first lesson in driving a motor and had trodden on the accelerator instead of the brake; the second time more recently, when he had made his first down-trip on an express lift. He had now precisely the same sensation of being run away with by an uncontrollable machine and of having left most of his internal organs at some little distance from the rest of his body. Emerging from this welter of emotion, stood out the one clear fact that, be the opposition bidding what it might, he must nevertheless secure the prize. Lucille had sent him to New York expressly to do so. She had sacrificed her jewellery for the cause. She relied on him. The enterprise had become for Archie something almost sacred. He felt dimly like a knight of old hot on the track of the Holy Grail.

He twiddled again. The ring and the bracelet had fetched nearly twelve hundred dollars. Up to that figure his hat was in the ring.

"Eight hundred I am offered. Eight hundred. Eight-eight-eight-eight——"

A voice spoke from somewhere at the back of the room. A quiet, cold, nasty, determined voice.

"Nine!"

Archie rose from his seat and spun round. This mean attack from the rear stung his fighting spirit. As he rose, a young man sitting immediately in front of him rose too and stared likewise. He was a square-

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built, resolute-looking young man, who reminded Archie vaguely of somebody he had seen before. But Archie was too busy trying to locate the man at the back to pay much attention to him. He detected him at last, owing to the fact that the eyes of everybody in that part of the room were fixed upon him. He was a small man of middle age, with tortoise-shell-rimmed spectacles. He might have been a professor or something of the kind. Whatever he was, he was obviously a man to be reckoned with. He had a rich sort of look, and his demeanour was the demeanour of a man who is prepared to fight it out on these lines if it takes all the summer.

"Nine hundred I am offered. Nine-nine-nine-nine——"

Archie glared defiantly at the spectacled man.

"A thousand!" he cried.

THE irruption of high finance into the placid course of the afternoon's proceedings had stirred the congregation out of its lethargy. There were excited murmurs. Necks were craned, feet shuffled. As for the high priest, his cheerfulness was now more than restored, and his faith in his fellow-man had soared from the depths to a very lofty altitude. He beamed with approval. Despite the warmth of his praise he would have been quite satisfied to see Pongo's little brother go at twenty dollars, and the reflection that the bidding had already reached one thousand and that his commission was twenty per cent. had engendered a mood of sunny happiness.

"One thousand is bid!" he carolled. "Now, gentlemen, I don't want to hurry you over this. You are all connoisseurs here, and you don't want to see a priceless china figure of the Ming Dynasty get away from you at a sacrifice price. Perhaps you can't all see the figure where it is. Willie, take it round and show it to 'em. We'll take a little intermission while you look carefully at this wonderful figure. Get a move on, Willie! Pick up your feet!"

Archie, sitting dazedly, was aware that Reggie van Tuyl had finished his beauty sleep and was addressing the young man in the seat in front.

"Why, halloa," said Reggie. "I didn't know you were back. You remember me, don't you? Reggie van Tuyl. I know your sister very well. Archie, old man, I want you to meet my friend, Bill Brewster. Why, dash it!" He chuckled sleepily. "I was forgetting. Of course! He's your——"

"How are you?" said the young man. "Talking of my sister," he said to Reggie, "I suppose you haven't met her husband by any chance? I suppose you know she married some awful chump?"

"Me," said Archie.

"How's that?"

"I married your sister. My name's Moffam."

The young man seemed a trifle taken aback.

"Sorry," he said.

"Not at all," said Archie.

"I was only going by what my father said in his letters," he explained, in extenuation.

Archie nodded.

"I'm afraid your jolly old father doesn't appreciate me. But I'm hoping for the best. If I can rope in that rummy-looking little china thing that Jo-Jo the Dog-Faced Boy is showing the customers, he will be all over me. I mean to say, you know, he's got another like it, and, if he can get a full house, as it were, I'm given to understand he'll be bucked, cheered, and even braced."

The young man stared.

"Are *you* the fellow who's been bidding against me?"

"Eh, what? Were you bidding against *me*?"

"I wanted to buy the thing for my father. I've a special reason for wanting to get in right with him just now. Are you buying it for him, too?"

"Absolutely. As a surprise. It was Lucille's idea. His valet, a chappie named Parker, tipped us off that the thing was to be sold."

"Parker? Great Scot! It was Parker who tipped *me* off. I met him on Broadway, and he told me about it."

"Rummy he never mentioned it in his letter to me. Why, dash it, we could have got the thing for about two dollars if we had pooled our bids."

"Well, we'd better pool them now, and extinguish that pill at the back there. I can't go above eleven hundred. That's all I've got."

"I can't go above eleven hundred myself."

"There's just one thing. I wish you'd let me be the one to hand the thing over to father. I've a special reason for wanting to make a hit with him."

"Absolutely!" said Archie, magnanimously. "It's all the same to me. I only wanted to get him generally braced, as it were, if you know what I mean."

"That's awfully good of you."

"Not a bit, laddie, no, no, and far from it. Only too glad."

Willie had returned from his rambles among the connoisseurs, and Pongo's brother was back on his pedestal. The high priest cleared his throat and resumed his discourse.

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"'Talking of my sister, I suppose you know she married some awful chump?' 'Me!' said Archie."

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' Now that you have all seen this superb figure we will—I was offered one thousand — one thousand-one-one-one-one — eleven hundred. Thank you, sir. Eleven hundred I am offered."

The high priest was now exuberant. You could see him doing figures in his head.

"You do the bidding," said Brother Bill.

"Right-o!" said Archie.

He waved a defiant hand.

"Thirteen," said the man at the back.

"Fourteen, dash it!"

"Fifteen!"

"Sixteen!"

"Seventeen!"

"Eighteen!"

"Nineteen!"

"Two thousand!"

The high priest did everything but sing He radiated good will and *bonhomie*.

"Two thousand I am offered. Is there any advance on two thousand? Come, gentlemen, I don't want to give this superb figure away. Twenty-one hundred. Twenty-one-one-one-one. This is more the sort of thing I have been accustomed to. When I was at Sotheby's Rooms in London, this kind of bidding was a commonplace. Twenty-two-two-two-two-two. One hardly noticed it. Three-three-three. Twenty-three-three-three. Twenty-three hundred dollars I am offered."

He gazed expectantly at Archie, as a man gazes at some favourite dog whom he calls upon to perform a trick. But Archie had reached the end of his tether. The hand that had twiddled so often and so bravely lay inert beside his trouser-leg, twitching feebly. Archie was through.

"Twenty-three hundred," said the high priest, ingratiatingly.

Archie made no movement. There was a tense pause. The high priest gave a little sigh, like one waking from a beautiful dream.

"Twenty-three hundred," he said. "Once twenty-three. Twice twenty-three. Third, last, and final call, twenty-three. Sold at twenty-three hundred. I congratulate you, sir, on a genuine bargain!"

Reggie van Tuyl had dozed off again. Archie tapped his brother-in-law on the shoulder.

"May as well be popping, what?"

They threaded their way sadly together through the crowd, and made for the street. They passed into Fifth Avenue without breaking the silence.

"Bally nuisance," said Archie, at last.

"Rotten!"

"Wonder who that chappie was?"

"Some collector, probably."

"Well, it can't be helped," said Archie.

Brother Bill attached himself to Archie's arm, and became communicative.

"I didn't want to mention it in front of van Tuyl," he said, "because he's such a talking-machine, and it would have been all over New York before dinner-time. But you're one of the family, and you can keep a secret."

"Absolutely! Silent tomb and what not."

"The reason I wanted that darned thing was because I've just got engaged to a girl over in England, and I thought that, if I could hand my father that china figure-thing with one hand and break the news with the other, it might help a bit. She's the most wonderful girl!"

"I'll bet she is," said Archie, cordially.

"The trouble is she's in the chorus of one of the revues over there, and father is apt to kick. So I thought—oh, well, it's no good worrying now. Come along where it's quiet, and I'll tell you all about her."

"That'll be jolly," said Archie.

ARCHIE reclaimed the family jewellery from its temporary home next morning. Then, feeling ripe for luncheon, he sauntered back to the Cosmopolis. On entering the lobby, he was surprised to see his father-in-law. More surprising still, Mr. Brewster seemed to be in jovial mood and even tolerably pleased to see his son-in-law.

"Halloa-alloa," said Archie. "I thought you were at Brookport."

"I came up this morning, to meet a friend of mine, Professor Binstead."

"Don't think I know him, what?"

"Very interesting man," said Mr. Brewster, still with the same uncanny amiability. "He's a dabbler in a good many things —science, phrenology, antiques. I asked him to bid for me at a sale yesterday. There was a little china figure——"

Archie's jaw fell.

"China figure?"

"Yes. The companion to one you may have noticed on my mantelpiece. I have been trying to get the pair of them for years. I should never have heard of this one if it had not been for that valet of mine, Parker. Very good of him to let me know of it, considering I had fired him. Ah, here is Binstead." He moved to greet the small, middle-aged man with the tortoise-shell-rimmed spectacles who was bustling across the lobby. "Well, Binstead, so you got it?"

"Yes."

"I suppose the price wasn't particularly stiff?"

"Twenty-three hundred."

"Twenty-three hundred!" Mr. Brewster

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seemed to reel in his tracks. "Twenty-three *hundred!*"

"You gave me *carte blanche*."

"Yes, but twenty-three hundred!"

"I could have got it for a few dollars, but unfortunately I was a little late, and, when I arrived, some young fool had bid it up to a thousand, and he stuck to me till I finally shook him off at twenty-three hundred. Why, this is the very man! Is he a friend of yours?"

Archie coughed.

"More a relation than a friend, what? Son-in-law, don't you know!"

Mr. Brewster's amiability had vanished.

"What damned foolery have you been up to *now?*" he demanded. "Can't I move a step without stubbing my toe on you? Why the devil did you bid?"

"We thought it would be rather a fruity scheme. We talked it over and came to the conclusion that it was an egg. Wanted to get hold of the rummy little object, don't you know, and surprise you."

"Who's we?"

"Lucille and I."

"But how did you hear of it at all?"

"Parker, the valet-chappie, you know, wrote me a letter about it."

"Parker! Didn't he tell you that he had told me the figure was to be sold?"

"Absolutely not!" A sudden suspicion came to Archie. He was normally a guileless young man, but even to him the extreme fishiness of the part played by Herbert Parker had become apparent. "I say, you know, it looks to me as if friend Parker had been having us all on a bit, what? I mean to say it was jolly old Herb. who tipped your son off—Bill, you know—to go and bid for the thing."

"Bill! Was Bill there?"

"Absolutely in person! We were bidding against each other like the dickens till we managed to get together and get acquainted. And then this bird—this gentleman—sailed in and started to slip it across us."

Professor Binstead chuckled—the care-free chuckle of a man who sees all those around him smitten in the pocket, while he himself remains untouched.

"A very ingenious rogue, this Parker of yours, Brewster. His method seems to have been simple but masterly. I have no doubt that either he or a confederate obtained the figure and placed it with the auctioneer, and then he insured a good price for it by getting us all to bid against each other. Very ingenious!"

Mr. Brewster struggled with his feelings. Then he seemed to overcome them and to force himself to look on the bright side.

"Well, anyway," he said, "I've got the pair of figures, and that's what I wanted. Is that it in that parcel?"

"This is it. I wouldn't trust an express company to deliver it. Suppose we go up to your room and see how the two look side by side."

They crossed the lobby to the lift. The cloud was still on Mr. Brewster's brow as they stepped out and made their way to his suite. Like most men who have risen from poverty to wealth by their own exertions, Mr. Brewster objected to parting with his money unnecessarily, and it was plain that that twenty-three hundred dollars still rankled.

Mr. Brewster unlocked the door and crossed the room. Then, suddenly, he halted, stared, and stared again. He sprang to the bell and pressed it, then stood gurgling wordlessly.

"Anything wrong, old bean?" queried Archie, solicitously.

"Wrong! Wrong! It's gone!"

"Gone?"

"The figure!"

The floor-waiter had manifested himself silently in answer to the bell, and was standing in the doorway.

"Simmons!" Mr. Brewster turned to him wildly. "Has anyone been in this suite since I went away?"

"No, sir."

"Nobody?"

"Nobody except your valet, sir—Parker. He said he had come to fetch some things away. I supposed he had come from you, sir, with instructions."

"Get out!"

Professor Binstead had unwrapped his parcel, and had placed Pongo on the table. There was a weighty silence. Archie picked up the little china figure and balanced it on the palm of his hand. It was a small thing, he reflected philosophically, but it had made quite a stir in the world.

Mr. Brewster fermented for a while without speaking.

"So," he said, at last, in a voice trembling with self-pity, "I have been to all this trouble——"

"And expense," put in Professor Binstead, gently.

"—— Merely to buy back something which had been stolen from me! And, owing to your damned officiousness," he cried, turning on Archie, "I have had to pay twenty-three hundred dollars for it! I don't know why they make such a fuss about Job. Job never had anything like you around!"

"Of course," argued Archie, "he had one or two boils."

"Boils! What are boils?"

"Dashed sorry," murmured Archie.

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"Acted for the best. Meant well. And all that sort of rot!"

Professor Binstead's mind seemed occupied, to the exclusion of all other aspects of the affair, with the ingenuity of the absent Parker.

"A cunning scheme!" he said. "A very cunning scheme! This man Parker must have a brain of no low order. I should like to feel his bumps!"

"I should like to give him some!" said the stricken Mr. Brewster. He breathed a deep breath. "Oh, well," he said, "situated as I am, with a crook valet and an imbecile son-in-law, I suppose I ought to be thankful that I've still got my own property, even if I have had to pay twenty-three hundred dollars for the privilege of keeping it." He rounded on Archie, who was in a reverie. The thought of the unfortunate Bill had just crossed Archie's mind. It would be many moons, many weary moons, before Mr. Brewster would be in a suitable mood to listen sympathetically to the story of love's young dream. "Give me that figure!"

Archie continued to toy absently with Pongo. He was wondering now how best to break this sad occurrence to Lucille. It would be a disappointment for the poor girl.



"Archie started violently, and Pongo fell with a sharp crack and disintegrated."

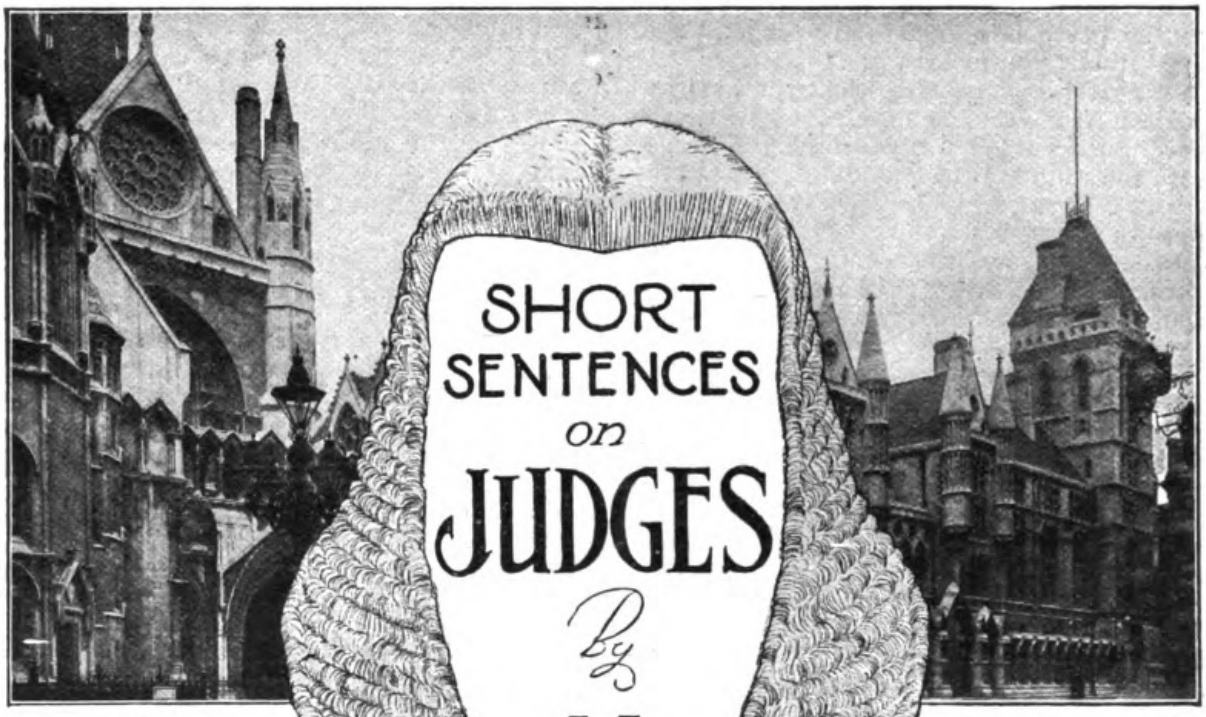
"Give me that figure!"

Archie started violently. There was an instant in which Pongo seemed to hang suspended, like Mohammed's coffin, between heaven and earth, then the force of gravity asserted itself. Pongo fell with a sharp crack and disintegrated.

"Well," said Professor Binstead, cheerfully, breaking the grim silence, "if you will give me your cheque, Brewster, I think I will be going! Two thousand three hundred dollars. Make it open, if you will, and then I can run round the corner and cash it before lunch. That will be capital!"

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Next month: "Paving the Way for Mabel."



SHORT SENTENCES on JUDGES

By

E. T. RAYMOND

Author of

"Uncensored Celebrities," etc.

TWO noted judges of the Victorian time were at dinner in an Assize town, when the Queen's health was drunk. One of them, the gentle Manisty, stood up automatically; thereupon his brother judge, the self-important Baron Huddleston, clutched him by the sleeve. "Sit down, Manisty, you fool," he said, in a loud whisper. "You're drinking your own health. *We are* the Queen!"

The story illustrates that special position of the judge which makes frank criticism a sort of indecency. Nobody dare say just what sort of a human being is a king until he has been a long time dead or a very short time deposed, and if that is not quite the case with judges, it is at least true that the best stories (and the least respectful) are told of those who are no longer with us.

Take, for example, that tale of the late Lord Chief Justice Russell. He was so annoyed by the bad play of a half-tipsy young guardsman who had been invited to make up a whist quartet that he threw up his hand, exclaiming, "This is not whist; it's tomfoolery."

"Keep your hair on, old cock," flippantly exclaimed the guardsman, on which Russell, swelling with anger and injured dignity, sternly demanded, "Do you know, sir, whom you are addressing?"

"Of course," was the young aristocrat's unabashed reply; "I know you well enough, but remember, my boy, you're not in your silly old police-court just now."

That sort of story is not told of a living judge; there is always just the chance that the *raconteur* might come before him some day—or perhaps the newspaper which was rash enough to give hospitality to the *raconteur*. Judges, in fact, really only get criticism from their fellow-judges, or from very wealthy and very intrepid counsel. Judges are very often extremely frank regarding each other. A learned brother told Lord Justice Field that people were saying



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he was too old and ought to retire. "I may not be fit to be a judge any longer," said Field, "but you never were."

A neater but not less biting retort was made a few years ago by a newly-created Lord Justice. As a rule those who agree with the ruling of the presiding judge simply say, "I concur"; only those who disagree state the grounds for their decision. On this occasion there was unanimity, and the penultimate "I concur" came from a rather pompous and none too luminous person who had till then been junior. "I also concur," chimed in the latest arrival, briskly. "My learned brother will pardon me," said the ex-junior, "but I was about to give my reasons for concurring," and for nearly a quarter of an hour he wandered through mazes of bad law and worse syntax, in the effort to explain his judgment. Then, big with self-importance, he turned to the junior as if to say: "Now you can have your say, and don't presume again in the presence of your betters." "*I still con-cur*," was the dry response that set the whole Court in a giggle.

THIS inhumanity of judge to judge does not, however, affect the truth expressed in Baron Huddleston's "*We are* the Queen." Every judge is a king—or rather the King—in his own Court, and, like the Bourbons, exercises a despotism only tempered by epigrams. "The King can do no wrong" is a maxim of the British Constitution. The King as represented by a judge can do wrong, but he can only be found wrong by the King as represented by a judge of still higher status; and as the public knows little of such niceties it ends by conceding to all judges as individuals the veneration which is really due to the representative of the monarch in his capacity of fountain of justice. All cats are grey in the dark, and all judges look wise in the dubious light of their courts. The counsel who practise before them know, of course, all their weaknesses, and now and then it happens that a judge hears very unpleasant home truths from a great advocate who has little to fear. One was told, not so very long ago, to "hold his tongue"—indeed to "hold his silly tongue"; and Sir Charles Russell once walked out of court and would not consent to proceed further without an apology from the Bench. As a rule, however, the attitude of counsel is blandly deferential, not so much because they are afraid of the judge as because they fear the effect a reputation for quarrelsomeness generally has on the flow of briefs from solicitors' offices. This extreme respect for "m'lud" tends to gloss over all judicial shortcomings and to confirm the general public in its almost superstitious awe of the learning, wisdom, and impartiality of all judges.

Yet judges, like other people, are human, and one differs from another in glory. There are judges who know a great deal of law—no judge, of course (or any other human being), knows all about the law—and there are judges who know very little. There are judges who are almost miraculously fair. There are—at least, there have been—other judges who, like James II., never hear more than one side of a case because to hear the other would confuse their minds. The late Sir William Grantham was a judge of this kind. The most amiable of men personally, and a very practical philanthropist, he was in every case a partisan. I used often to see him at work, and only remember one case in which he had even a momentary hesitation as to which side he should favour. In that case each party represented something he loathed, and it was some time before he could adjust the balance of his prejudices and proceed with satisfaction on a fixed line. But ordinarily he was quite happy, and fact and argument broke against the adamantine wall of his preconceived opinion as harmlessly as the waves of the Atlantic against the rocks of Land's End.

Judges, indeed, are only men with a certain training and a certain tradition; and though training and tradition are both mighty, nature is mightier still. There are, accordingly, weak judges and strong judges, with every variety of strength and weakness. There are peppery judges and good-humoured judges, judges merciless and judges humane, judges acute and judges conspicuously stupid, judges alert and judges who sleep and even snore on the Bench.

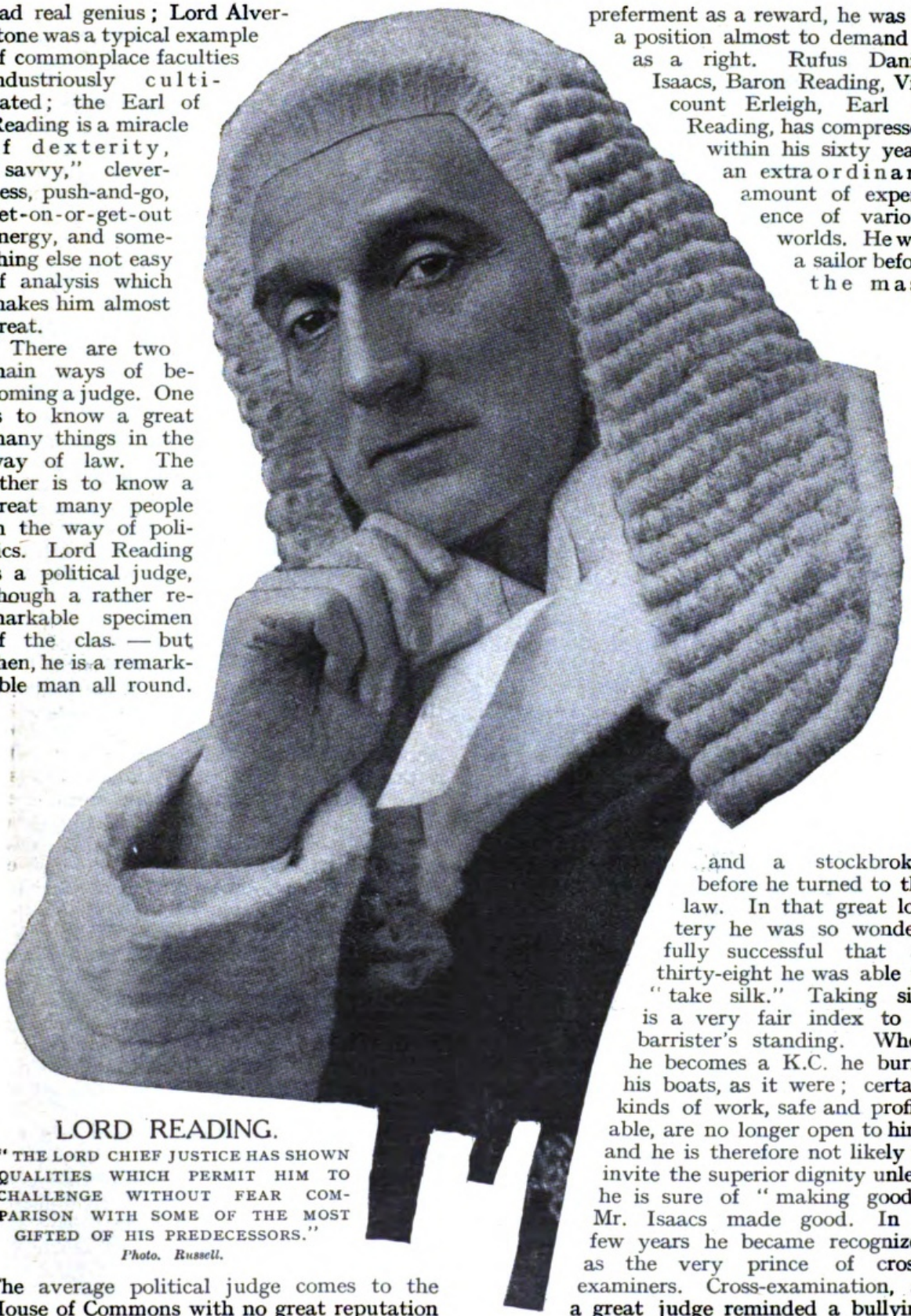
There are even (though this is rare) pious judges, like that one who was referred to by an "h"-less old barrister as "'umming 'is 'ymn-tunes, 'oly old 'umbug, oh, 'ow I 'ate 'im." Lord Halsbury, the veteran Lord Chancellor, who still takes a lively interest in things at ninety-five or so, and was a marvel of intellectual vigour in his eighties, was distinctly religious; Lord Phillimore is almost a theologian; and there have been a number of Nonconformist ornaments of the Bench. But on the whole the law tends little to devotion. "Your profession," said the doctor, "does not make men angels." "That's exactly what yours does," was the swift retort.

Great among judges is the Lord Chief Justice of England, and his post is generally filled with the utmost care. But even among "Lord Chiefs" there are extraordinary variations of talent. There could hardly have been men more different than the last three who have filled that most dignified seat. Lord Russell of Killowen

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had real genius; Lord Alverstone was a typical example of commonplace faculties industriously cultivated; the Earl of Reading is a miracle of dexterity, "savvy," cleverness, push-and-go, get-on-or-get-out energy, and something else not easy of analysis which makes him almost great.

There are two main ways of becoming a judge. One is to know a great many things in the way of law. The other is to know a great many people in the way of politics. Lord Reading is a political judge, though a rather remarkable specimen of the clas — but then, he is a remarkable man all round.



LORD READING.

"THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE HAS SHOWN QUALITIES WHICH PERMIT HIM TO CHALLENGE WITHOUT FEAR COMPARISON WITH SOME OF THE MOST GIFTED OF HIS PREDECESSORS."

Photo. Russell.

The average political judge comes to the House of Commons with no great reputation in the Courts, and works his way upwards concurrently in both spheres. Mr. Rufus Isaacs, on the other hand, was famous as an advocate long before he entered the House, and, instead of accepting judicial preferment as a reward, he was in a position almost to demand it as a right. Rufus Daniel Isaacs, Baron Reading, Viscount Erleigh, Earl of Reading, has compressed within his sixty years an extraordinary amount of experience of various worlds. He was a sailor before the mast and a stockbroker before he turned to the law. In that great lottery he was so wonderfully successful that at thirty-eight he was able to "take silk." Taking silk is a very fair index to a barrister's standing. When he becomes a K.C. he burns his boats, as it were; certain kinds of work, safe and profitable, are no longer open to him, and he is therefore not likely to invite the superior dignity unless he is sure of "making good." Mr. Isaacs made good. In a few years he became recognized as the very prince of cross-examiners. Cross-examination, as a great judge reminded a bullying counsel, is not the art of examining crossly. The old heavy-handed Buzfuz manner, which relied on terrorism, is not quite extinct, but is mostly practised by inferior men. The newer plan, in which

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Mr. Isaacs excelled, is genial bamboozlement and suave entrapment.

You might, as a hostile witness, feel some tremor when Mr. Isaacs picked up a handful of papers, adjusted his pince-nez, and took you in hand. But the first half-dozen questions would put you at ease. Afraid of this frank, smiling gentleman, with courtesy in every line of his handsome aquiline face, and self-disparagement in every movement of his flexible shoulders and active palms? Absurd. So you went on easily and naturally, on good terms with yourself and in perfect charity with your pleasant interlocutor. And then of a sudden, as the novelists say, a strange thing happened.

A quite innocent question, a quite natural reply, and the Court was lively as a French farce just before the *dénouement*. All the legal fat was in the fire. Up bobbed counsel on your side with an objection: there were five tense minutes in which Mr. Isaacs' hands, voice, eyebrows, shoulders, spine, and pince-nez did incredible things; and then finally came, "And now, sir, with his ludship's permission, I will proceed. Did you——" It was all over with you. Mr. Isaacs had one more scalp to his credit, and one more tale for the Bar mess.

IF such talents yielded a prodigious income it was certainly earned. For years Mr. Isaacs would be up at five—or even at four—to master a brief on which he had to "lead" at half-past ten; every essential must be grasped before the average Londoner had dipped his shaving-brush into hot water. But Mr. Isaacs had the true Jewish knack of never tiring at sedentary work, and no juryman ever saw him other than smiling, fresh, jaunty, and self-confident.

At forty-four he entered Parliament as Liberal member for Reading. On the back benches he made no great mark; indeed, to the end he never quite won the ear of the House. His special faculties were better suited to a jury than a mob, even a mob of gentlemen. With that particular jury called the Cabinet he achieved an enormous success; he first conquered the foreman, Mr. Asquith, and then took the rest in detail. First Solicitor-General, then Attorney-General (with the unprecedented favour of a seat in the Cabinet), no man seemed more fully insured against the malignity of fate, buttressed as he was by the esteem of the Prime Minister, the brotherly affection of Mr. Lloyd George, and the liking of everybody else who mattered, when the Marconi affair for a moment threatened this brilliant edifice of success. But only for a moment; the storm in the House of Commons had hardly ceased to reverberate before Mr. Asquith offered his Attorney-General a peerage and the great post he has since occupied—whenever he has had the time to do so.

It so happened that for long Lord Reading had not the time. During the war he was chiefly employed off the Bench, and his advances in the peerage are the rewards of the skilled financier and of the adroit ambassador, rather than of the sagacious judge. Since his return, however, Lord Reading has shown qualities which permit him to challenge without fear comparison with some of the most gifted of his predecessors. He gives, indeed, no promise of taking rank with the very greatest. He seldom utters anything on the level of Cockburn, or even Russell, but he has in an eminent degree three great judicial qualities, a strong common sense, a compelling dignity, and a power of getting, through mazes of legal niceties, at the heart of the matter. So far, however, it is the enormous personal success that remains the chief interest of his story. He is rather the subject for a future Smiles on "Self-Help" than for an unborn Blackstone on the Laws of England.

A POLITICAL judge of another type is Mr. Justice Darling, who carried out in Lord Reading's absence most of the duties of the Lord Chief Justice. "It was managed by a job," sings (pianissimo) the learned lawyer who presides in "Trial by Jury." "Job" is the crude description of what is often a most beneficial departure from routine. It is natural that when a Lord Chancellor elevates to the Bench a comparatively unpractised barrister, the cry should go up that the public interest has been sacrificed to private partiality; and no doubt that view is sometimes justified. "People talk of a scandal," said one Lord Chancellor with reference to his appointments. "Which is the worse scandal? That three men who, perhaps, don't know quite as much law as they might, should be put in a position where they can learn it, or that three men of excellent family should go through the Bankruptcy Court?"

That is an extreme case, but it is a fact that many Chancellors go, as Mr. J. A. Strahan points out in his interesting book on Bench and Bar, on Lord Lyndhurst's principle, looking first for a gentleman, and "if he knows a little law, so much the better." Curious as it may seem, such appointments often turn out extremely well, while there are many failures among the judges appointed on what Lord Melbourne called "damned merit."

It was to the kindly discrimination of Lord Halsbury, once unkindly known as "the Lord High Jobber," that Sir Charles John

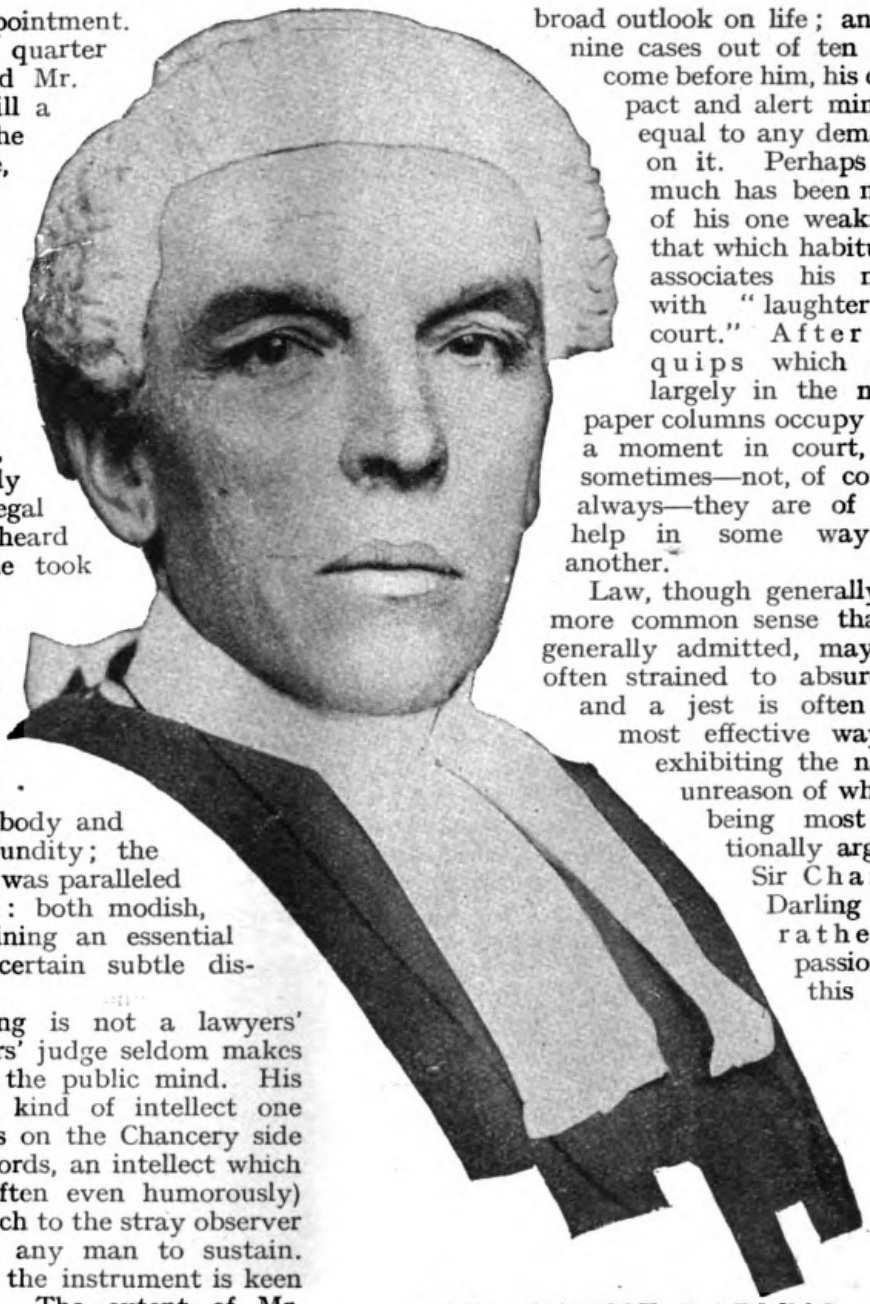
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Darling owed his appointment. This was nearly a quarter of a century ago, and Mr. Justice Darling is still a great legal figure. The length of his service, and his comparative immunity from "reversal" in Courts above, suggest that Lord Halsbury was not far wrong in his judgment of the former member for Deptford. "Deptford's Darling" was, it is true, not heavily equipped on the legal side. He was seldom heard in big cases, and he took his duties, whether as Q.C. or as Conservative member, with something less than the full seriousness of the impassioned place-hunter. He was just a little too well-dressed, in body and mind, to suggest profundity; the smartness of his coat was paralleled by that of his brain: both modish, well cut, and combining an essential ordinariness with a certain subtle distinction.

Sir Charles Darling is not a lawyers' judge; a real lawyers' judge seldom makes much impression on the public mind. His is not the amazing kind of intellect one sometimes encounters on the Chancery side or in the House of Lords, an intellect which bears lightly (and often even humorously) a load of learning which to the stray observer seems too great for any man to sustain. But within its limits the instrument is keen and of fine temper. The extent of Mr. Justice Darling's legal attainments is for experts to determine; but, at any rate, he cannot be classed with the judge who was commonly called "Old Necessity," on the ground that he "knew no law." Sir Charles does know some law, and, like many judges not specially deep, he has often a fancy for displaying his erudition. His judgments are nearly always marked, indeed, by an airing of all kinds of knowledge, and he seldom misses an opportunity of acquainting the public with his views on art, literature, and things in general.

But there is a native shrewdness in Sir Charles which compensates for much of the superficiality with which he is charged by certain grave practitioners in the Temple. He knows human nature; he preserves a broad outlook on life; and in nine cases out of ten that come before him, his compact and alert mind is equal to any demands on it. Perhaps too much has been made of his one weakness, that which habitually associates his name with "laughter in court." After all, quips which bulk largely in the newspaper columns occupy only a moment in court, and sometimes—not, of course, always—they are of real help in some way or another.

Law, though generally far more common sense than is generally admitted, may be often strained to absurdity, and a jest is often the most effective way of exhibiting the naked unreason of what is being most rationally argued. Sir Charles Darling has rather a passion for this kind of interpellation, and that perhaps accounts for the feelings of some solemnly legalistic barristers concerning him. He can often be quite impishly crushing. Once he spoke of a cause which had been withdrawn as an "impudent action." Next morning counsel in the case applied that it should be reinstated, in order to show that the plaintiff, however ill-advised, had acted in good faith. The judge beamed on the barrister. "Mr. Blank," he said, "like David, I spoke yesterday in my haste. I should not have used the word '*impudent*.'" Counsel interrupted with purring self-satisfaction. "Of



MR. JUSTICE DARLING.

"SIR CHARLES DARLING IS ONE OF THE FEW SURVIVING 'CHARACTERS' ON THE BENCH."

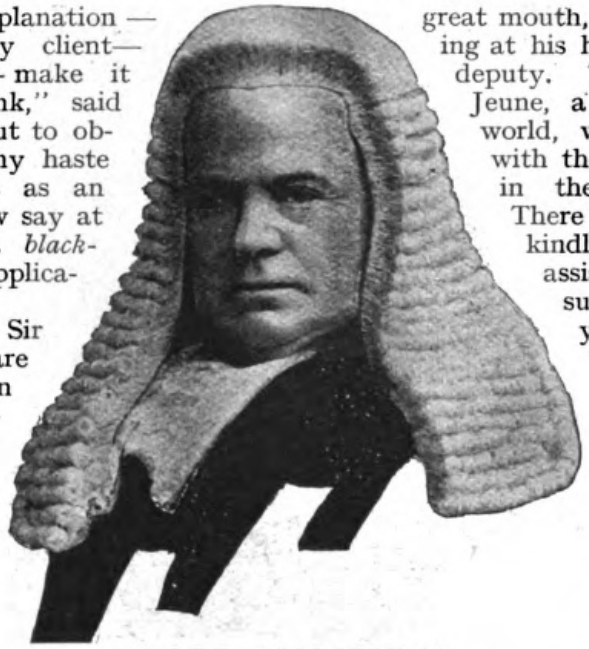
Photo. Swaine.

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course — ludship's explanation — wholly satisfactory—my client—only wished, m'lud — make it clear——" "Mr. Blank," said the Judge, "I was about to observe that I spoke in my haste when I described this as an *impudent* action. I now say at leisure that it was a *blackmailing* action. The application is refused."

To do justice to Sir Charles, his jokes are seldom silly — plays on words and the like—and they are never brutal, as so many of the older judicial witticisms were. Mr. Justice Darling is a thoroughly kind-hearted man, and could not jest over solemn matters, as Lord Norbury did when he told a man convicted of stealing a watch (then a hanging matter), "You grasped at time, and, egad, you grasped eternity." His *obiter dicta* are mostly compressions of common sense, such as his definition of the term "for life," in reference to the appointment of a medical officer: "for his life, or until he kill a patient." But, unlike the celebrated Scotsman, he does joke with too little difficulty, and Nemesis arrived for him in that marvellous Pemberton-Billing case, in which he failed to exercise the ascendancy a sterner character would have made decisive.

Sir Charles is one of the few surviving "characters" on the Bench. Only a few years ago they abounded. There was the partisan-minded Grantham aforesaid—with the exception of Mr. Justice Ridley the most "reversed" judge on record. There was the vastly learned and extremely untidy Vaughan Williams, who wore the same tall hat for years; people in assize towns, going to welcome him at the station, would hardly believe that the sturdy little man, with a short pipe in his great mouth, and the bulldog following at his heels, was His Majesty's deputy. There was the courtly Jeune, a perfect man of the world, who unmade marriages with the least possible fuss, and in the pleasantest manner. There was the knowing but kindly Barnes, who first assisted and afterwards succeeded him. And, some years farther back, there was the wonderful Hawkins, with his satyr leer, his hatred of open windows, and his habit of adjourning for race-meetings.

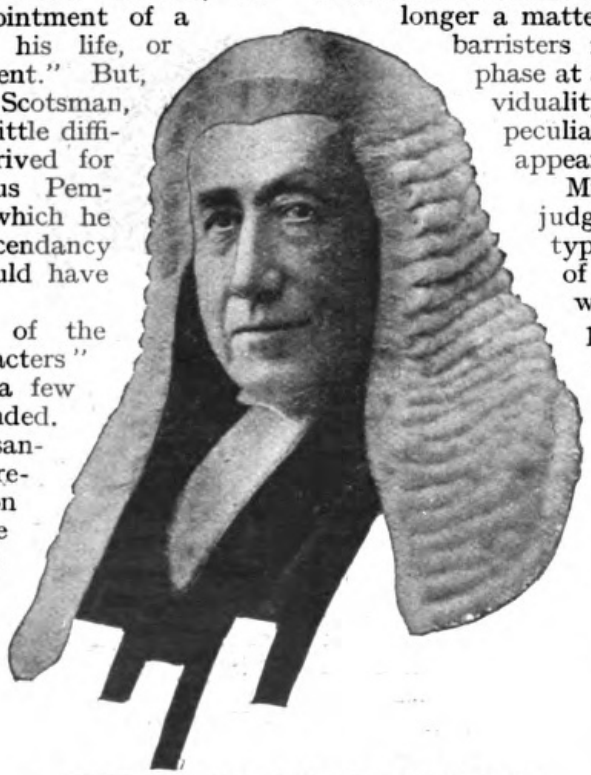


LORD HALSBURY,

"WHO STILL TAKES A LIVELY INTEREST IN THINGS AT NINETY-FIVE OR SO."

Photo. Elliott & Fry

Of late judges have been more of a pattern, possibly because political appointments have been fewer, but certainly also because the habits of Bench and Bar have been greatly modified. There is now nothing like the old life on Circuit, with its conviviality and bachelor freedom, and lawyers approximate more closely to ordinary professional types. Residence in chambers for many years is no longer a matter of course, and many barristers never go through that phase at all. Thus the old individuality of men developing in peculiar conditions is fast disappearing.



THE LATE LORD JUSTICE VAUGHAN WILLIAMS—

"VASTLY LEARNED AND EXTREMELY UNTIDY."

Photo. Downey.

Mr. Justice Avory is a judge of the more modern type, and also an example of the professional lawyer who has never been a professional politician. His political views are his own affair, but I believe it is a fact that he was once approached by a Liberal Association which considered him an excellent candidate for that interest, and also by a Conservative Association which believed that it had at last discovered the one man fit to keep flying in its district the true-blue colours of unbending Toryism. Mr. Avory considered both offers, first arrived at the conclusion that one or

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other side must be wrong, and then at the fixed conviction that something must be wrong with both. In this case he did not cross-examine, though "it is his nature to"; no man at the Bar in his time, except perhaps Sir Edward Carson, was more dreaded by a hostile witness.

Mr. Justice Eve, in the Chancery Division, is a little reminiscent of older days. He is one of the judges with whom little liberties are taken because they are loved, and not because they are not respected. When some judges were entertained by the Bar a few years ago, one of the toasts was "Wine and Woman, coupled with the names of Mr. Justice Lush and Mr. Justice Eve." Nobody would venture on a little waggery like that with coldly business men such as many of the more newly-appointed judges. Mr. Justice Eve is a sound enough lawyer, but one feels that he was meant for the country he loves; he spends his "long" in a caravan, and comes back with a face of that mixture of black and red one sees in the brickwork of Lincoln's Inn. There have been many great lawyers who took up rural life as a hobby—"milking a cow with one hand and annotating Chitty on Torts with the other," as a legal wit put it. But Mr. Justice Eve was so obviously meant for a West Country farmer that his presence in the drab Chancery Court has an effect of violence on the stranger who strays into it.



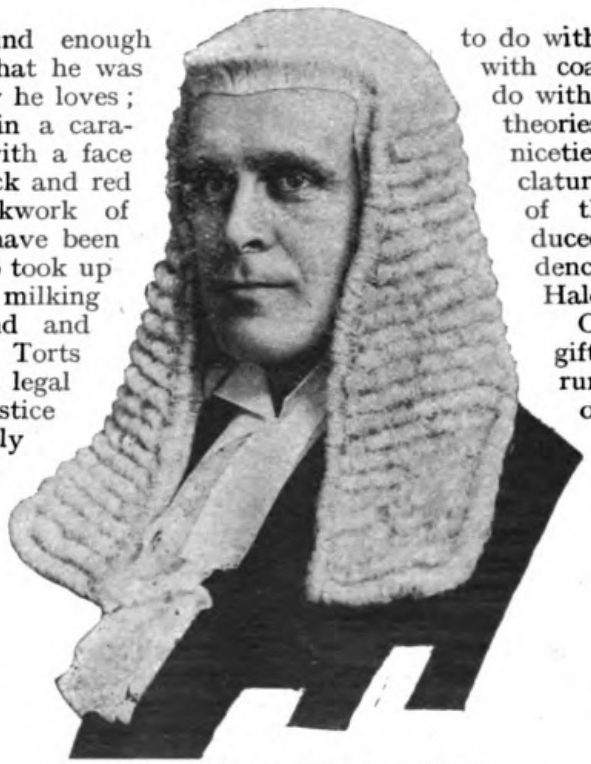
MR. JUSTICE EVE

"IS ONE OF THE JUDGES WITH WHOM LITTLE LIBERTIES ARE TAKEN BECAUSE THEY ARE LOVED, AND NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT RESPECTED."

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

Few judges are now better known than Sir John Sankey, of Coal Commission fame; yet for a long time he passed through life in unnoticed efficiency. As a boy he went to Lancing, a small public school of a slightly clerical flavour; in the same unobtrusive spirit he became an undergraduate at Jesus, one of the Oxford Colleges where the foot of the Englishman seldom treads; the men are mostly Welsh, and there is great trouble in sorting out the letters to all the Joneses and Davieses. With his habit of getting into corners now almost reaching the level of a vice, Mr. Sankey became Chancellor of the Diocese of Llandaff; finally he was caught — by what means it is not quite clear—and made a knight and a judge. And, as the chorus in the Gilbertian opera says, "a good judge, too." His legal reputation has always been high; he gained his fame with the public over something which had nothing whatever to do with law, but a little to do with coal, and a vast deal to do with questions of Scripture, theories of social morality, niceties of economic nomenclature, and the organization of the Territorials (introduced, in the guise of evidence on mines, by Lord Haldane).

One can imagine this gifted lawyer sometimes ruminating on the quality of fame. He may even dream at nights of Mr. Smillie presiding over a Royal Commission, composed of coal-miners and coal-owners, to consider the wages of His Majesty's judges, and the transfer to private enterprise of the Law Courts.



MR. JUSTICE SANKEY,

"WHOSE LEGAL REPUTATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN HIGH."

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

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The following story, which was sent in for our Short Story Competition, was one of those from which the judges made their final selection. Unfortunately, however, it was found to exceed the maximum length of six thousand words, and therefore had to be disqualified.

The WRONG TURN

by

W. BOURNE COOKE

ILLUSTRATED BY W.R.S STOTT

WHEN, after a lonely three-mile tramp across the fields from the little country station, Mr. Gabriel Pimroy, solicitor, of Fenchurch Street, E.C., at length arrived in front of Monksweir Grange, he was surprised to find no smoke emerging from its ancient Tudor chimneys; also, that no lights showed from its ivy-framed, stone-mullioned windows, although the gathering dusk of a December evening called for some illumination.

Pausing with his hand upon the entrance-gate, Mr. Pimroy gazed in a puzzled and inquiring manner at the old grey building which thus strangely showed no sign of welcome. The silence of desertion hung about the ancient gabled place—a silence quite uncanny to a man just fresh from London's throbbing life. What did it mean? How was it? Had he mistaken the directions given him (with rather a queer look, he fancied) by that fossil of a porter at the sleepy station? He looked about. No other house was visible. Thick, gloomy woods hemmed in the house on three sides, while behind him lay the winding field-path he had traversed. No mistake about direction, then; besides, that heavy-visaged porter had described the place: "A rum old building wi' a mort of ivy on it." Yes, this was Monksweir Grange beyond all doubt; but why this tomb-like silence and repellent air of desolation?

Here an idea came to Mr. Pimroy. His client, Mr. Josswing, who had wired for him, was an eccentric man, as mean as he was wealthy. Perhaps it pleased his parsimonious nature to drag out a miserly existence in some small quarters at the rear, and thus reduce expenses to a minimum.

"Yes," muttered Mr. Pimroy, "that explains it," and forthwith put his theory into practice; that is to say, he swung the heavy gate (it creaked resentfully) and, bag in hand, walked briskly up the winding, moss-grown drive. But when half-way to the house he slackened pace and finally stopped dead to gaze at it again with fresh misgiving. He did not like this nearer view of it a bit. An unexplainable but certain feeling of repugnance came upon him; a strong disinclination to proceed; almost a vague desire to turn and hurry back across the darkening fields to Abbot's Halt, pass the night there in its cheerless waiting-room, and return to town by the first train on the following morning. For, truth to tell, this man of law had dabbled in occultism, attended

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séances, and, in a word, gained that " little knowledge " which is stigmatized as " dangerous." What if this place was haunted ? " Ridiculous," said Mr. Pimroy, and moved on again, a strange, unlikely, dapper little figure in his tall silk hat, smart overcoat, light gloves, and spats. Not briskly this time, though, but rather slowly and observantly. And even by that fading light he noted how utterly uncared for was the house and its surroundings. The untrimmed ivy, waving here and there in long festoons, beat on the leaded windows ; the grass upon the lawns was coarse and long ; the beds a mass of weeds ; the shrubs a riot of unpruned confusion. To Mr. Pimroy, with his love of neatness and exactitude—his practised eye for " most desirables "—the whole place reeked of slow decay and miserly neglect. It was enough, thought Mr. Pimroy, with, say, an occult shiver, to make the long-dead builders of the house rise from their graves and haunt its present soulless owner day and night.

" Shame ! " he muttered, as he set down his bag before the massive black oak door (brand-new about four hundred years ago), knocked sharply, and looked expectantly for it to open. But it did not open ; rather did it mock him with its hard, nail-studded strength.

The lawyer stamped his feet and swore aloud.

" What does the old fool mean by this ? " he growled ; then, bringing forth a flashlight, scanned the entrance. A rusty bell-knob, loose with age, obtruded on the right side of the door. He pulled it angrily, and from somewhere in the rear a harsh, metallic clang arose, reverberated long and loudly through the house, then slowly died away.

A feeling similar to those which he had known when sitting breathlessly expectant at those London séances came over Mr. Pimroy ; he longed for something noisy, earthly, which might break the spell and snap the straining tension. Oh ! for the barking of a dog, the sound of footsteps, curses—anything but this dead, creeping silence !

Again a strong desire came over him to retrace his way across the fields to Abbot's Halt and throw himself upon the mercies of the putty-faced old porter, who at least was human, and who no doubt possessed some sort of home where warmth and food might be obtainable by generous payment. A plentiful supply of bread and cheese, hot tea, a fire—the thought of these now priceless blessings urged Mr. Pimroy to a swift retreat. But here a sudden inspiration came to him. Perhaps old Mr. Josswing lay there ill and unattended ? The thing seemed feasible enough. He might, by miserly neglect, have driven off what little help he had possessed, and then, while carrying on as best he could, been seized with sudden illness. Yes, that surely was the explanation of an otherwise black mystery.

Having reached this very natural conclusion, Mr. Pimroy told himself that, as the legal representative of one whose estate ran to a good half-million sterling, it behoved him to investigate the matter thoroughly. Moreover, when he came to think of it, that porter at the station, with his loutish grins and winks, had seemed to know too much. Now lawyers, as a class, are apt to look askance at men who know too much ; they rather favour men who know too little ; and in this respect our friend was no exception to the general rule of an astute profession ; he therefore told himself that Abbot's Halt at any rate was not the place to fly to (such action would most certainly arouse suspicion), and as there was no other station to his knowledge, he forthwith made a virtue of necessity and thereupon determined to give Mr. Josswing every chance, by ringing, rapping, shouting, or, if needs be, throwing pebbles at the windows. And, if these efforts failed, he might not even be averse to taking sterner measures, by endeavouring to force an entry. Nothing should stop him—that he vowed.

PRIMED by this brave resolve, to which he gave the fancy name of duty, but which really owed its origin to a dreadful fear of being roofless till the morning, Mr. Pimroy turned and rang the bell again. The silent house resounded with its clangour as before, but nothing came of it. He knocked, he kicked, he shouted, but all with the same dead, blank result. Well, then, he would now bombard the windows ; and in his present state of mind he cared not greatly if he broke them either. It took a lot to ruffle Mr. Pimroy's calmly legal mind, but this experience was sufficient to enrage a saint.

Bent on this new effort, he was just about to leave the entrance for the house-front when his flashlight fell upon a slip of paper lying underneath a bush close by. The sight of it seemed positively friendly to the lawyer's eye. He picked it up and pricked himself in doing so ; a pin transfixed it, while written in a fine bold hand (not, certainly, his client's, which was crabbed and shaky) were these words :—

" To Mr. Pimroy.

The entrance is unlocked.
Come in. Turn handle twice."

The lawyer smiled. No mystery here. The pin explained it. This paper had been

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fastened on the door, a strong north wind had carried it away. One of old Josswing's queer, wild tricks, without a doubt. But who had written it for him? No matter — proof was everything.

Mr. Pimroy had already tried the iron ring without avail, but acting as instructed he now gave it two sharp turns, and sure enough the heavy door gave way and, groaning on its hinges, opened.

Picking up his hand-bag, Mr. Pimroy entered, slowly, stealthily — more like a burglar than a lawyer; then, having closed the door behind him, swept his new surroundings with the flashlight.



"His flashlight fell upon a slip of paper."

The sight disclosed was nauseous to a man whose London chambers were as neat and speckless as his own trim person. The spacious, stone-flagged entrance-hall, festooned with spider-webs, looked like a place which had not known a human touch for years. Thick dust lay everywhere, and Mr. Pimroy might have finger-written all his clients' names therein upon the surface of a big oak table. An eight-day clock had stopped at half-past two, though whether a.m., p.m., yesterday, or fifty days ago it was, of course, impossible to say. A big brown rat crept from a hole behind the wainscoting, glanced up at him with evil eyes, then instantly shot back again. The lawyer shuddered, and wished with all his heart that he had chosen Abbot's Halt instead of this accursed place of desolation. Indeed, he felt inclined to go there even now; but a moment's thought decided him against this course. The station would no doubt be closed before he reached it; nor did his town-bred taste quite favour the idea of a three-mile country walk across the fields in darkness. Besides, that someone was inside the house he felt assured. And if that someone were old Josswing, ill and unattended, then he needed help indeed. Precisely so, and helped he should be.

Somewhat fortified by this decision, Mr. Pimroy tried to form some line of action. What course should he take? Well, first of all he coughed — a strictly legal cough, judicious, one might say — slightly interrogative, not too loud. But no sooner had he done so than he wished he hadn't, for it re-echoed loudly, far and wide, as though a dozen men with laryngitis had performed.

This put a period to his next idea—that of shouting Mr. Josswing's name. He could not face a repetition of those ghostly, mocking echoes. Instead, he turned his flashlight on a carved oak staircase. Should he ascend it and make search for his preposterous client? No—not yet, at any

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rate. While he remained just where he was, escape into the outside night (a radiant place compared with this!) was easy; but up aloft there in that dreadful, unknown silence—well, Mr. Jonah Josswing might go hang first.

Thus debating with himself, the lawyer raised his light towards the wall which flanked the staircase. A row of family portraits, framed in gilt—now almost black with dust—gazed down with grinning and, as it seemed to him, indignant faces. No wonder either, was his mental comment. One of them, he fancied, bore a strong resemblance to his client. "His father, if I'm not mistaken," muttered Mr. Pimroy, as he lowered his light upon the hall again. What a mercy he had dropped the torch into his pocket just as he was leaving home!

Here it should be explained that, although our friend was Mr. Josswing's legal representative, he had seen that gentleman but once, and that was on the day of his appointment six years earlier. Recommended by a mutual friend (since dead), he had met old Josswing at a second-rate hotel in London, received instructions, documents, etc., arranged remuneration, and left his new-won client lunching sumptuously off four raw apples and a slice of bread.

Thenceforward Mr. Pimroy's task had been an easy one. His client's wealth was admirably invested. The dividends arrived with clock-work regularity, and all he had to do was to pay them into Mr. Josswing's credit at the Bank of England. At first he marvelled at the miserly amount which Mr. Josswing drew for "personal expenses," but the memory of bread and apples soon explained it. At times he fairly itched to swell the capital by reinvesting interest. Indeed, he had suggested this, but "Three per cent. and safety is my maxim!" came the tart rejoinder, written on a postcard. Each half-year he sent in an exhaustive summary of accounts, with salary deducted, received a postcard in acknowledgment, and there the matter ended. It was as simple, say, as eating bread and apples!

This method of procedure had gone on unbrokenly until the previous afternoon, when, to his great astonishment, the lawyer had received an urgent telegram (partly in code) from Mr. Josswing. Handed in at the G.P.O. of a neighbouring town, it ran as follows:—

"Come Monksweir Grange first train to-morrow. Station, Abbot's Halt, G.W.R. Bring will and list of investments. Also five Mandrakes in Nemos. Very urgent. Wire if can come and train to Josswing, G.P.O. Cribminster."

On getting this strange summons Mr. Pimroy had at once bestirred himself; that is to say, he had got the necessary documents together, drawn five thousand pounds in notes (that being the interpretation of "five Mandrakes in Nemos") directly the bank opened, and had come down with as much post-haste as a wretched train service permitted. And here he was—but where was apple-munching Jonah Josswing? No wonder Mr. Pimroy, standing, cold and famishing, amid the dust of Monksweir Grange, felt bitterly resentful of its owner, and cursed him handsomely from head to foot. This relieved him somewhat (strong language in such cases, especially by one not partial to it, acts as an emetic), and enabled him to form some sort of plan. He would, he told himself, explore the ground-floor rooms (aloft he dare not go), where haply he might find some food (if only bread!)—perchance some fuel too; a couch to lie on, and a rug to cover him. This accomplished, he would lock himself inside a room and pass the night there; then, in the morning (daylight fosters courage!), he would go upstairs, root out old Josswing, and, *inter alia*, let him have some home truths—yes, if he lost his job through doing so!

THUS strengthened mentally and morally, Mr. Pimroy moved towards a deep recess. His flashlight fell upon a door and, pinned thereto, a slip of paper similar to that which he had found outside. He hurried up to it, and, written in the same bold hand, read these astounding words:—

"Refreshments here.
Light fire if needed.
For full instructions look
beneath the cheese-dish."

Entering eagerly, the lawyer saw a sight that made him hug himself. The room was comfortless, the table clothless, and, though dusted, none too clean; but spread thereon his gloating eyes beheld a cold roast fowl, a dish of tarts, pickles (of which he was particularly fond), a loaf of bread, a flask of Harvest burgundy, and cheese; while candles and a fire of logs required but lighting.

Now, Mr. Pimroy was just then a ravenously hungry man. Next minute he had locked the door behind him, taken off his overcoat, and placed his bag—that precious bag, containing Mr. Josswing's will, five thousand pounds in cash, and other matters—on a corner table. This done, he lit both fire and candles, and sitting down before the festal board, fell to with—in modern feminine parlance—an absolutely gorgeous appetite.

And as he ate and drank the lawyer's spirits rose, as also did his estimate of Mr. Josswing. Yes, yes, in spite of all his ugly

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eccentricities, old Joss (the lawyer's privately familiar name for him) was not so bad. This was his way of showing hospitality, and certainly it might have been far worse. He might, for instance, have provided bread and apples!

"All's well that ends well," quoted Mr. Pimroy, toying lightly with his cheese. His face was rather flushed, his eyes unduly bright; for even Harvest burgundy, when taken freely on the top of six hours' cold and abstinence, is apt to have a way with it.

"Yes, yes," he went on, amiably, "old Joss is right enough. Needs careful handling, that's all. Wonder what the deuce he wants that money for? Astounding. Well, well, leave it till the morning. See him then."

Here came a sudden flash of memory. He raised the cheese-dish. Sure enough, a paper lay beneath it. He picked it up and, written in the now familiar hand, read this:—

"Please note carefully."

"Your bedroom, second on left, first landing. Mr. Josswing will be with you there at 9.30. This is important. Do not fail."

For a good half minute Mr. Pimroy stared at this amazing document, then threw it down with an emphatic:—

"No, I'll see him hanged first! What," he added, gazing indignantly about the room, "leave this for—for that?"—he glanced aloft and shuddered at the bare thought. "Not much! If Jonah Josswing wants to see me at nine-thirty, he must come down here. I don't leave this till morning."

As if to seal this firm resolve, he filled another glass (his fifth) and tossed it off; then drew up a big arm-chair close to the fire, sat down therein, and stretching out his legs resigned himself entirely to the soporific influence of wine and heat. Nor was it long before this combination worked its will upon him. By turns he nodded, jumped, and groaned; until at last his head fell back, and Mr. Gabriel Pimroy, Solicitor, Commissioner for Oaths, of Milton Chambers, Fenchurch Street, E.C., was fast asleep, and, not to put too fine a point upon it, snoring lustily.

It was ever afterwards a much-debated question with the lawyer as to what aroused him; but at any rate he woke up with a violent start, to find the fire a smouldering heap of ash, the candles guttering in their sockets, and himself (to use his own expressive simile) "as cold as frozen mutton."

He cast an anxious look towards his bag. It still stood there upon the table just as he had placed it. He pinched himself to make sure that he was not dreaming. He called himself a fool (as men will when alone and fearful), not because he really thought he was one, but rather, paradoxical as it may read, to prove his wisdom and restore his self-possession. This, however, was no easy matter; nay, everything was dead against it. The smouldering ashes on the hearth; the fitful, flickering candle-light, which cast weird, jumpy shadows on the wall, and threatened every moment to expire in one high-leaping, final blaze; the wailing—as of tortured spirits—of the wind outside—all these conspired to fill the luckless, shivering representative of Law and Equity with grave uneasiness.

Good heavens! What was that? From behind the wainscoting there came a rushing, scurrying noise—a scream, demoniacal, fiendish; then dead silence as before.

Gripping the arms of his chair, the lawyer sat bolt upright, listening. He felt his scalp creep, and what little hair it boasted seemed to rise. "Rats," he tried to say with lips that failed him. "Spirits," said his all too ready inner consciousness. To make things worse, one of the candles on the table just then rose into a sudden flare, blazed high for a moment, then went out. Its fellow would not be long in following suit, and then? Dead darkness in that room? The very thought was insupportable. True, he had his torch; but what was that in such a place? Its concentrated light on one particular spot would only serve to make the others darker. Besides, its battery was weakening (he had noticed that when standing in the hall), and might at any moment fail him. What should he do then? Here his eye alighted on a pile of spare logs standing near the hearth, and brought him an idea. If only he could coax the dying embers into life again, he had sufficient fuel there to keep a bright blaze going till the morning. No sooner thought of than attempted. Placing a log upon the ashes, he knelt and puffed with all his might. In vain; a mocking, feeble glow was all he got, and paper there was none except the document inside his bag. Barely had he risen from this failure when his ear caught that which stiffened him with fear. The creak of stairs beneath a stealthy tread broke out as it seemed quite close to him. It went on step by step, with growing faintness, till at length it stopped, and all was still again.

NOW, as already stated, Mr. Pimroy's knowledge of occultism was of that superficial nature which engenders fearful apprehension of the spirit world, without that calm assurance which proficients in the science seem to have. At

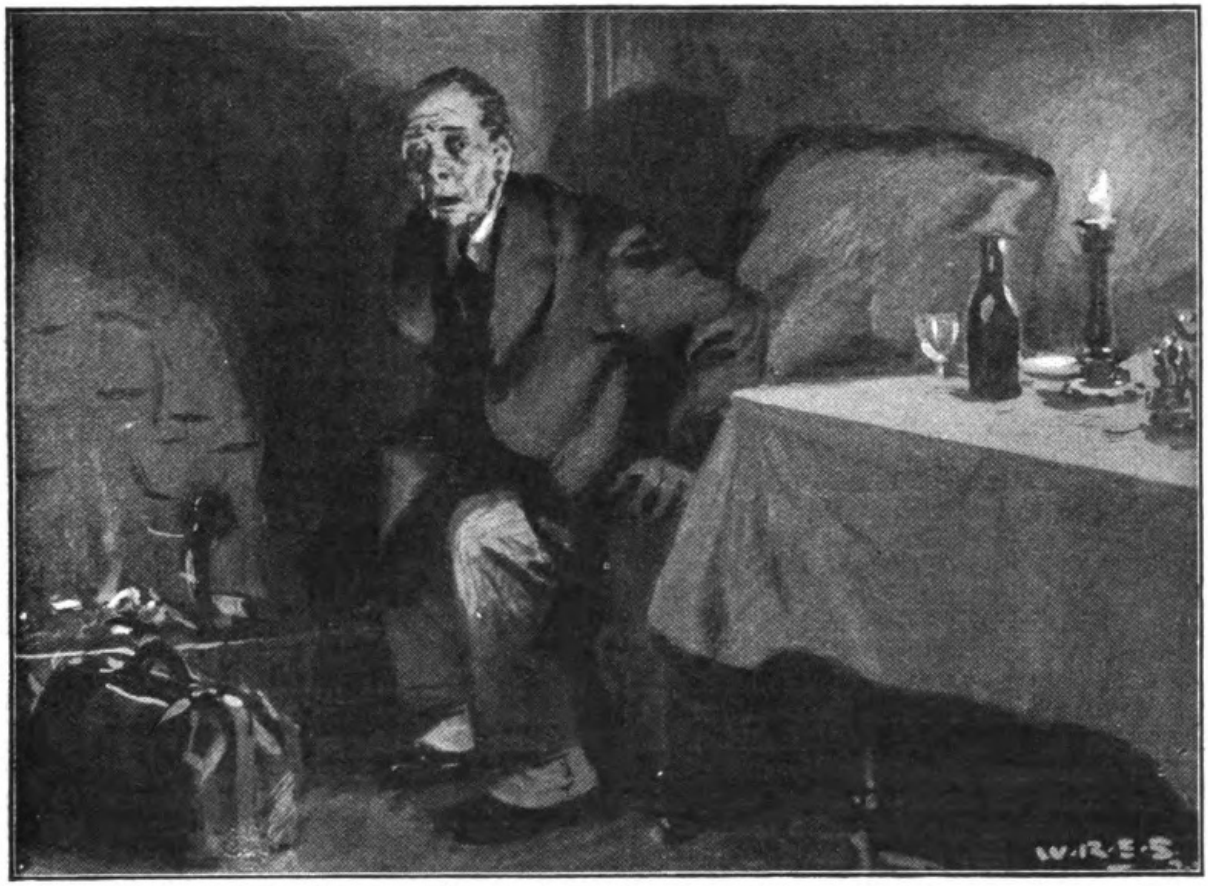
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London séances he had sat in silent, darkened rooms, and witnessed supernatural happenings with a fearful curiosity; but always with a comfortable sense of busy streets outside and friends within. But here, alone, amidst such dread surroundings it was different. His little knowledge grew into a big, gigantic horror. A cold sweat broke out on his face; his knees smote one upon the other as he stood there waiting fearfully for what might happen next.

But nothing happened, and the awful silence that ensued seemed still more terrible by reason of its grim uncertainty. He tried to think. With trembling hands (it took the two of them to steady it) he brought his watch out. Nine-twenty-five! Five minutes to the time appointed by the "full instructions." Yes, he would go upstairs at all costs and whatever happened. Better anything than darkness in that room.

Huddling into coat and hat, he took his bag, and running to the door like one pursued unlocked it. Even as he turned the key the second candle flared up as its fellow had done, and expired. Bag in one hand, flashlight in the other, Mr. Pimroy crept into the silent hall, stood there for a moment listening, then, with legs that shook beneath him, climbed the dusty, creaking stairs, until he reached the landing. Here he stopped again to scan the doors confusedly. In his bewildered state he had forgotten whether it was "second on the right" or "left." But he *thought* it was the "right," so went up to that door accordingly, and tried it. It was locked, but the key was there. He turned this very slowly, lifted the latch as noiselessly as possible, and entered.

One glance within sufficed to damp what little hope he may have had of better things. A lamp, turned low, revealed a carpetless and meanly furnished room. Three chairs, a chest of drawers, a table, and, overshadowing all, a huge four-poster bed, surmounted by a canopy with curtains drawn, gloomed like a nightmare.



"Gripping the arms of his chair, the lawyer sat bolt upright, listening."

"Your bedroom"! What a cruel mockery! The lawyer's mind reverted wistfully and sadly to his cosy chamber up in London, with its blazing fire, arm-chair, hot-water bottle, and electric light; and then he stared at that funereal monster of a bed, and shuddered at the very thought of lying even *on* it—*in* it, never!

His estimate of Mr. Josswing, which had risen somewhat while he ate below, now came down with a run again. He cursed his mean

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ingratitude and cold neglect. Yes, but where was the miserly old wretch? The half-hour had gone by five minutes since, and still there was neither sign nor sound of him. Well, he would give him till a quarter to, then lock the door (he had brought the key in), endure the night as best he could, and with the dawn shake off the dust (the medium was plentiful!) of this accursed place, and wash his hands for ever of its soulless, inhospitable old owner.

Thus determining, the lawyer scanned the room again. Thank God, he thought, there was a lamp. He turned it up, took off his hat, and with the precious bag close by him, sat down upon a chair and asked himself some puzzling questions. What was the meaning of this (to use his own expression) "damnable affair"? Why had he been summoned down thus urgently, and treated with such unaccountable discourtesy? Where *was* old Josswing? What did he want that money for; and, wanting it, how was it that he—a muck-rake miser, who would skin a flea for twopence—had not come to claim so large a sum? Who wrote those notices? Whose was that footstep on the stairs? Why was the house so still and utterly deserted? Again, and finally, where *was* old Josswing?

These fruitless questions put, the lawyer found, on glancing at his watch again, that it was ten to ten; five minutes past the time allowed. He rose and locked the door. If Josswing came now, he must knock.

The door thus safely fastened, Mr. Pimroy listened for a moment, then, hearing nothing, took his seat again and tried to think. But thought, to any useful purpose, was, as he soon found out, impossible. His legal mind went flitting like a butterfly from point to point, in anything but legal fashion; but ever in the same dread ghostly circle. Try as he would to dwell on other things, his mind reverted to those London séances and conjured up each unexplainable, and now disturbing, detail. He heard again that creak of stairs beneath a stealthy tread. Here something tapped upon the curtained window like a finger-knuckle, and he sprang up with a gasp of terror. Was this room haunted, too, then? Had he unseen company up here as well? He had—as he was soon to know—though of a kind he never dreamt of.

The tapping went on with methodical insistence, and a wild idea came to him. What if old Josswing had been locked out, and with the help, say, of a ladder was thus trying to attract his notice! With trembling hands he made a tiny aperture between the heavy curtains, and flashed his torch upon the window; then a little nervous laugh escaped him. A trailing spray of ivy, swinging in the night wind—that was all!

This simple explanation was a vast relief; it steadied him and gave him courage. Yes, yes, of course he was unnerved—no wonder, either—and *imagined* things! Perhaps that other sound—the creaking stairs—had been imagined also; the natural outcome of a dazed condition, following heavy sleep and nervous strain. No doubt the mystery of Mr. Josswing's absence—of the empty house and written notices—would easily be solved when morning came. Perhaps the old man had been called away and unavoidably detained. Perhaps—a hundred things!

HAVING carefully replaced the curtains, Mr. Pimroy turned into the room again, relieved, but very far from being easy. No doubt the morning would make all things clear enough, but what of the intervening hours? How should he pass, say, eight of those? He glanced towards the curtained bed. No!—not at present, anyway. Later, if sleepiness and leaden eyelids forced him to it, he might, perhaps, be driven to lie down, but not till then. No, but he must do something. Think he could not—dare not. If only he had brought a book! With the wish that he had done so, his eye alighted on the bag. Ah! the will, the documents, the cash! He would go through those again. The touch of paper, notes, and parchment would be a blessed real thing where all else seemed *unreal*.

Sitting down, he took the bag upon his knee, brought out the will and opened it. It was a lengthy document, detailing as it did each of the testator's many holdings. "A good half-million, certainly," commented Mr. Pimroy as he folded up the parchment: and the sole beneficiary, a distant only relative named Eric Josswing, was a wanderer—heaven knew where. Next came a pile of neatly docketed and red-taped papers, through which the lawyer waded word by word, to find them perfectly in order and refreshingly exhaustive. Next, he took the notes and counted those. Quite right—fifty of £100 apiece. The crackle of them bucked him up amazingly, for cash is cash, however worried or wherever you may be.

By the time all this was done, and everything replaced methodically in the bag beneath his sleeping-suit, the lawyer felt as drowsy as a dormouse. He yawned and stretched himself, then cast a doubtful look towards the curtained bed. Why, he argued, sit there shivering on a hard oak chair, when he might rest his weary frame in some degree of comfort? The door was locked, and with a blanket and his overcoat for covering he could, he thought, sleep soundly

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"With trembling hand the lawyer threw the door wide open. A tall young man in khaki stood before him."

till the morning. What a blessing that would be! Should he try it? Yes, he would. Going over to the bed, he threw the curtains wide, then started back aghast. Old Jonah Josswing lay there—dead!

For one tense moment Mr. Pimroy stood staring in dumb horror at the cold, set features; then a loud cry of "Murder!" left his lips.

The clanging of a door below, the sound of heavy, leaping feet upon the stairs. Staggering over to the door, the lawyer stood beside it swaying—listening. Someone stopped upon the landing just outside, and "What's up? Where are you?" asked a deep, uneasy voice.

"H-here!" gasped Mr. Pimroy. "Help!"

"Who's there?" rejoined the voice, and the latch was tried.

"I—Pimroy."

"'Struth! Then let me in, man."

With trembling hand the lawyer turned the key and threw the door wide open. A tall young man (an officer) in khaki stood before him.

"Ah!" said he, "a slight mistake, sir. Took the wrong turn, eh? Your room's just opposite. My fault entirely. I should have marked it with a notice. But really, sir, I've been bored stiff with duties—that's a fact."

"Sir," said the lawyer, staring at him in amazement, "what in God's name does this mean?" He pointed with a shaky finger to the bed.

"That?" said the other, stepping jauntily into the room and glancing in the same direction. "Well, let us say it means that Jonah Josswing has departed this life, full of years, and taken nothing with him save his money-stained old soul. Nothing to sob about, I fancy, eh? Oh, no," he added, as the lawyer turned upon him with a quick, suspicious look, "I didn't kill him. Natural

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causes. Everything O.K., sir, I assure you. Found him so when I arrived here yesterday. He died the day before—so the old thing, his housekeeper, informed me."

"His housekeeper! Where is she?"

"Oh, in the nether regions somewhere. Can't induce her to forsake them. That's why I had to stick up notices to guide you. Helped me get your supper after much persuasion—that was all she would do."

"Then," said Pimroy, "it would be her I heard ascending stairs below there."

"Most likely. Going to her bedroom. Hope you didn't meet her?"

"No."

"Thank God for that," rejoined the officer. "You'd scarcely have survived it. Awful! Bad as shell-shock! Hope you found the supper fairly good?" he ran on, gaily. "Best I could manage in this howling wilderness. Sorry I'm so late, but the beastly taxi broke down three miles off, and made me walk. Been to Cribminster, you know, on business—doctor's certificate, undertaker, registrar, and such tomfoolery. Gad, sir, when you've seen some hundreds of fine chaps put underground without a word, as I have, all this bally fuss about a—a thing like that"—he pointed to the bed—"is just a hollow mockery. Nuff said, though; let's get out of this. I've got fairly decent quarters for you over there. A fire, some Johnnie Walker, and a good cigar. So come."

"No," said the lawyer, with a show of firmness which his chattering teeth belied, "as—as legal—representative of the—the deceased, I—must refuse to leave this room until I know——"

"Bunkum!" broke in the other, cheerily. "You shall know everything as soon as we are comfy over there. Deceased won't hurt, I'm sure, so come along. Why, man alive, you're fairly shivering with cold and shock! No wonder, either. Come on."

Picking up Mr. Pimroy's various belongings, he, with a gentle pressure, urged the staring and bewildered lawyer out on to the landing, and having locked the door, escorted him into another room just opposite. Here a bright fire was burning, with an easy chair on each side of it, while between them stood a table bearing a whisky bottle, siphon, and cigars. The sight warmed Mr. Pimroy's chilly heart.

"Make yourself quite comfy," said the young man, pointing to a chair; then having mixed two good stiff glasses, handed one to Mr. Pimroy, sat down opposite, and raised his own.

"Here's to the house of Josswing, sir!" he cried, and raised his glass.

The lawyer followed suit and took a long, deep drink, but did not say a word: he could not, he was too bewildered and amazed.

"And now," went on the other gaily, "where's the rhino?"

"The what?" exclaimed the lawyer, with an air of legal ignorance. "I—I don't quite follow you."

"Why, the cash—the notes—five thousand pounds. You understood my wire—the code—I hope!"

"*Your* wire," fenced Mr. Pimroy, with an uneasy glance in the direction of the bag. "Excuse me, but the telegram which I received was signed by Mr. Josswing."

"Exactly, that's my name, at present; though, by heavens, I'll change it by deed poll as soon as possible! I'm Eric Josswing, sir. You may have heard of me."

"Eric Josswing!" cried the lawyer, starting forward.

"Yes. For heaven's sake, sir, don't tell me that he's cut me off!"

"No," gasped Mr. Pimroy; "but—well—this is bewildering—astounding. How—how came you by our private cipher?"

"Oh, quite easily. Demobbed three days ago. I tracked the old man down. Came here and found him dead. Looked for his will, but couldn't find it anywhere—he must have hidden it. But I rooted out a paper giving your name as his solicitor, and also a sort of money signal-code, and—well, I used it, don't you know. So now, old bean, do let me have the notes. I fairly itch to handle 'em."

"Sir," said Mr. Pimroy, gravely, with a guarding hand upon the bag, "this is unusual—and—er—excuse me—most irregular. As legal representative of the deceased, I must be sure of your identity before—I—er—can——"

"Part, eh?" put in the other, quickly. "Quite so. I'd clean forgotten that." From his pocket he brought forth a well-worn wallet. "Here's my birth certificate—and pass-book (badly overdrawn, I fear)—and here's a letter from the dear departed—the only one I've got—refusing me a loan of fifty quid. There you are," he added, pushing them across the table. "Hope you'll find them quite O.K.—except, perhaps, the bank balance, and that the notes will rectify."

"Ye-es," murmured Mr. Pimroy, after a close examination of the various items, "these seem perfectly in order."

"Good. Then hand the rhino over."

"Rather an unusual procedure," said the lawyer, "before the will is proved—and—er—but—well——"

He fumbled in his bag, brought forth the notes, and laid them, with a sigh, upon the table. The other grabbed them eagerly; counted them, made them crackle, patted them, then put them in his pocket.

"By Jove!" he said, "what luck! Just

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fancy, Eric Josswing, late captain in the 2nd Royal Warwicks, with a credit balance! Holy Moses! Now read the will, sir, please, and let me see just how I stand. It's usual to read 'em after death, I fancy, eh?"

"After interment, as a rule," corrected Mr. Pimroy.

"Quite near enough," rejoined the other, gaily. "The funeral's to-morrow. Gad, and what a funeral! Holy Moses! you and I chief mourners in a coach and pair! Shall we send a wreath—'In loving memory,' etc.? Oh, lor! What a mockery! What hypocrites we are!"

"Sir!" exclaimed the lawyer..

'Ah, yes, of course," laughed Eric Josswing. "Shocking, ain't it? However, get a move on, do, old bean. Let's have the will, I'm all attention."

Bringing out the document in question, Mr. Pimroy coughed a time or two, and read it with professional deliberation.

"Thanks, awfully," said Josswing, when the end was reached. "Quite O.K. It seems to me I get the lot."

"You are sole beneficiary," corrected Mr. Pimroy. "Allow me to congratulate you, sir."

He held his hand out, and the other seized it with a grip that made its owner wince.

"I feared," said Eric, musingly, "he might have cut me off—disinherited, you know."

"Between ourselves," rejoined the lawyer, in a confidential undertone, "he threatened more than once to do so, and let the whole estate go into Chancery at his decease. But I—er—managed to persuade him to—er—wait and see. May I ask where you have been all these years?"

"Been! Oh, everywhere and everything, from a trombone-player in a travelling circus to a cowboy. You see, the old grubber never would allow me anything, so I had to take pot-luck. Came home when the war broke out, enlisted, worked my way up to captain, and—well, here I am. Say, old bean," he added, pointing to the will, "how much might it run to?"

"Well, half a million, at the very least. Perhaps considerably more," replied the lawyer.

"Jerusalem! A fortune! We'll make it fly, though, now, eh, won't we?"

"Fly, sir! I don't quite follow you."

"Why, I mean I'll try to save the old man's soul by scattering his money right and left to some good purpose. I'll build a hospital, perhaps a church or two, throw in a few church organs (I'm mad on music), and, above all, help disabled Johnnies far and wide. In short, I'll make things hum, sir; and you'll help me, won't you?"

"I," said the lawyer, "shall be happy to assist you to the very best of my ability."

"Good business! Then suppose we start right off. May I ask you how much the dear departed paid you for this job, sir?"

"My salary," replied the lawyer, with a deprecatory little cough, "amounted to two-fifty pounds per annum."

"Monstrous!" roared Eric Josswing, with a blow upon the table. "Just like him. Absolutely rotten. Consider it a thousand from this moment."

"Sir," cried Mr. Pimroy, starting upright in his chair, "this is too amazing—too generous—too—too——"

"Not a bit of it," put in the other, carelessly. "It's just a start upon the proper road, that's all. And now I don't mind telling you I've clicked it with the sweetest girl in Christendom. I saw no chance of marrying, but now we'll fix it up at once. Let's see, to-morrow's Friday—well, suppose we say next Wednesday. How would that be?"

"Excuse me," ventured Mr. Pimroy, diffidently, "but since you ask me, wouldn't that be just a trifle—premature? A wedding and a funeral within the week, sir!"

"Not a bit of it," rejoined the young man, cheerily; "you can't have happiness too soon: at least in such a case as this. An absolutely quiet stunt, you know—say at some little village church. I hope you'll stay and see me through it."

"I," gasped Mr. Pimroy, staring blankly, "shall be—happy—to—to attend you as—as desired."

"Good. And now, old bean, you're downright dog-tired. No wonder, either, so I'll leave you. I'm hanging out next door. You'll find the rats a little noisy, but they're harmless, and you'll soon get used to 'em. Tra-laa! Hope you'll sleep well. See you in the morning. Good-bye-ee!"

And, singing gaily, Eric Josswing went his way.

For a time the lawyer sat there staring at the fire; then, scarce knowing how or why, undressed himself, lay down, and, strange to say, slept like a log.

FIVE days later, just as Mr. Pimroy was about to step into the London train at Abbot's Halt, the heavy-visaged porter touched him on the shoulder, saying:—

"I heerd tell as old man Josswing's dead, sur."

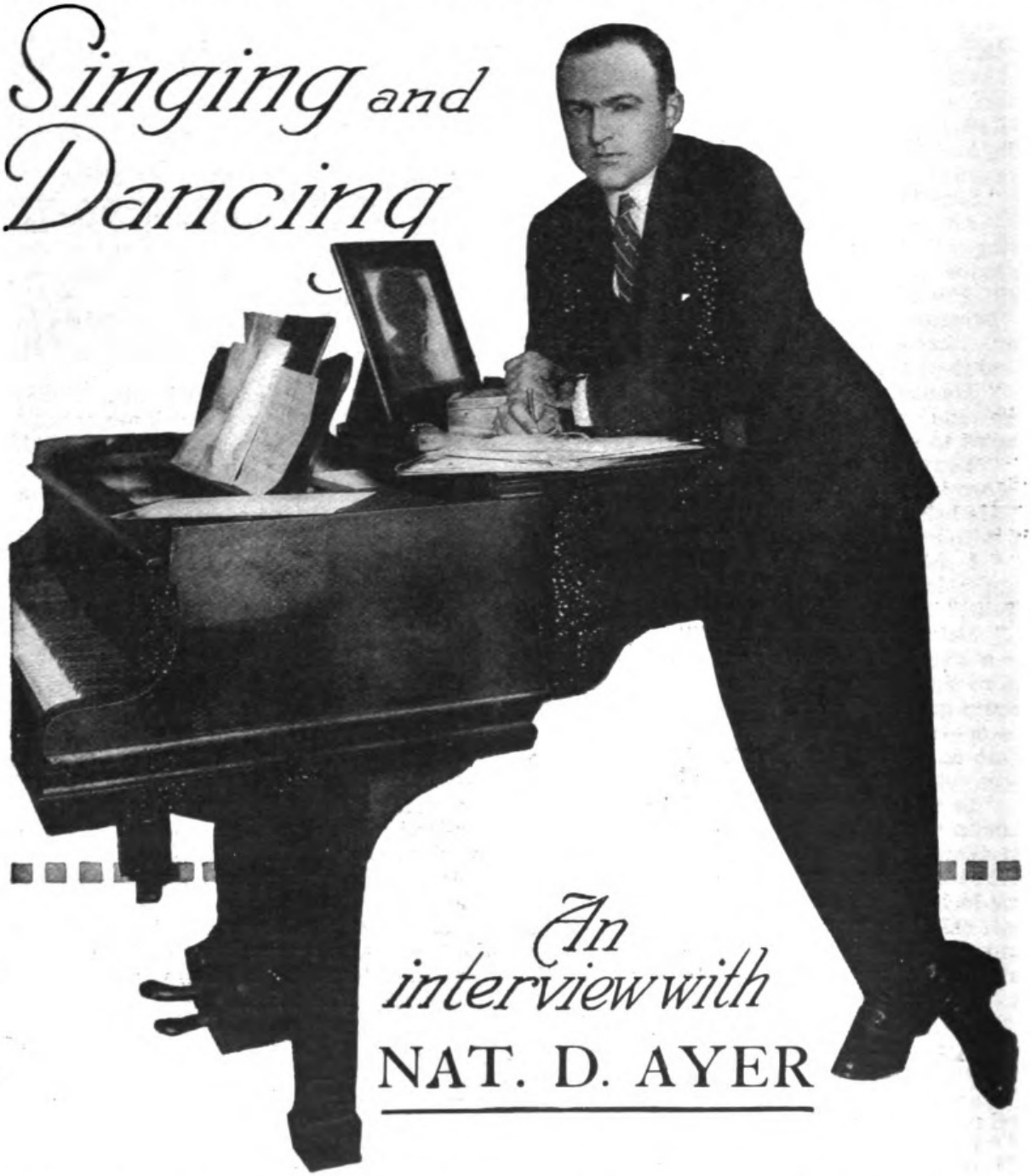
"Yes," said Mr. Pimroy, sharply. "Dead and buried."

"Queer pla-ace that theer Gra-ange, sur."

"Yes—very queer," rejoined the lawyer; then took his seat, and presently went whirling up to London, feeling ten years younger than he had upon the downward journey.

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The Man who set the World Singing and Dancing



An interview with NAT. D. AYER

"I SUPPOSE," said Mr. Nat. D. Ayer, "that I must plead guilty to being responsible for the 'Turkey Trot.'"

Mr. Nat. D. Ayer is the young American composer (he is really thirty-two, but he looks about twenty) who has supplied the modern whistling errand-boy, the up-to-date suburban pianist, and the new family gramophone with most of their favourite airs.

Some years ago Mr. Ayer wrote an instrumental piece called "King Chantecleer," and it was from this that the "Turkey Trot" originated. He devised the rhythm on which the steps of the dance were based.

"I am not a musician," said Mr. Ayer,

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"I am just a composer, and have discovered that rhythm is the main factor in the success of a song. Whenever a composer can invent a new and distinctive rhythm, he is sure of success. The average person, who goes to a theatre to be amused, possesses, as a rule, very little musical knowledge and very little musical appreciation. But nearly everybody in this world has a sense of rhythm."

Mr. Ayer served during the war with the Canadian Army and was on the staff of Major-General Watson, the one newspaper General that the war produced. His theories on song-writing were confirmed by his military experience.

"I discovered," he said, "that hundreds of men can march in time, who could not whistle the melody of a song right through to save their lives, just as dozens of people can dance who cannot sing a tune. They all have that sense of rhythm, and this carries them along. If a composer wants to write popular songs and be a popular success, he must bear in mind all the time what the bulk of the people want and what they understand. Most people dance nowadays, and the popular song, from my point of view, is the song that makes the ordinary young man and the ordinary young woman, sitting in the stalls, feel that they want to dance.

"The successful popular composer must be as observant as a journalist. I walk about the streets with my eyes open, watching people, and watching things, and most of the ideas of my songs have come from conversations. Many of my titles have been suggested by popular expressions. For instance, it may be remembered that Mr. George Robey in 'The Bing Boys' sang a song called 'I stopped, I looked, and I listened.' In America there are large signposts on all the railway level crossings: Stop! Look! Listen! These signposts gave me the idea of the song.

"Years ago in America we used to call young girls 'dolls,' just as you call them 'flappers' here in England. One day I was coming out of the stage-door of the Columbia Theatre, in St. Louis, as a strikingly beautiful young girl was passing up the street. I turned to my companion and said: 'There is a beautiful doll,' and immediately the idea of 'Oh, You Beautiful Doll' came into my head.

"The idea of my song, 'If You Talk in Your Sleep, Don't Mention My Name!' came from a comic picture postcard that I happened to see in a shop-window. These are examples of the fact that the composer must be as actual as the cinema if he is to attract public favour."

Mr. Ayer discovered by accident that he could compose.

"When I was a boy of fourteen I was taking piano-lessons at the Faelten Pianoforte School in Boston, and was selected to





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play at the annual school concert. I started all right, but the second *motif* went clean out of my head. Instead of breaking down and crying, I went on playing any old thing that came into my head until the real *motif* returned to me, which it did after a few moments, and I finished the piece and nobody in the audience knew that I had wandered away from the composer. When I came off the stage, my piano-master said a few things to me not suitable for publication, but he added that I would some day earn my living by composition.

" In 1908, when I was twenty-one, I went to New York, and went on the stage. I made friends with a man called Seymour Brown, who wrote lyrics, and he and I started to write songs together. The first song that I ever wrote was called ' Moving Day in Jungle Town.' It was sung by Eva Tanguay and was the ' feature ' song of the Follies in 1909. The song was suggested by the late Colonel Roosevelt's hunting trip in Africa, and the ' catch ' words of the refrain are :—

Run, you lions and tigers, run, run, run,
Here comes Teddy with his gun, gun, gun.

" Among the series of songs that I wrote afterwards were : ' Oh, You Beautiful Doll ' and ' You're My Baby,' and a little later, ' Everyone in Town Loves My Girl ' and ' At the Fox Trot Ball.'

" I came to England in 1914, and among the first of my songs to be sung here were ' At the Fox Trot Ball,' which was the first song that Miss Beatrice Lillie ever sang in this country, and ' Squire Chumley,' which was sung by Mr. Nelson Keys.

" ' The Bing Boys,' which was produced at the Alhambra in 1916, was the first show for which I furnished the entire score. It may be remembered that the trio ' Another Little Drink Won't Do Us Any Harm,' sung by Miss Violet Loraine, Mr. George Robey, and Mr. Alfred Lester, was one of the great successes of this production, and I recall with some amusement that everyone prophesied it would be a failure, because it was too American. The theme is not mine. It was originally a ' Gang Song,' sung by the students of the famous Military College at West Point, and it probably dates back to the period that followed the Civil War. When I was told that the song was too American, it occurred to me that men *do* have another little drink in England sometimes, and the sentence has now become part of the English as well as of the American language. No doubt by the time these lines are in print it will have become obsolete in my country.

" Another of the outstanding successes of ' The Bing Boys ' was : ' If You Were the Only Girl in the World,' sung by Miss Loraine and Mr. Robey. This song provides an example of a fact upon which I always insist. That is, that novelty and surprise are vital for success. I do not remember in the history of this kind of entertainment another instance of the love theme being sung by the low comedian and the comedienne. The management had their doubts, but I believe in doing the unexpected and trying something new, and I am convinced that the surprise caused by Mr. Robey dropping his comic character for a few minutes and becoming serious did a great deal to make the success of ' If You Were the Only Girl.'

" After ' The Bing Boys ' came ' Pell Mell ' at the Ambassadors, in which I acted myself. Then ' The Bing Girls ' was produced. This piece was not a great success, but I contrived to get a big song hit out of it with ' Let the Great Big World Keep Turning.'

" I have since composed the music of ' The Bing Boys on Broadway ' and ' Yes, Uncle ' (my first musical comedy, which ran for eighteen months), and ' Baby Bunting.' "

It is interesting to note that Mr. Ayer, with all his modernity, does what so many other composers have done, and borrows from what are really the folk-songs of his country. West Point cadets and Southern cotton-pickers have helped to give his scores a distinction. Indeed, in talking to Mr. Ayer one feels his lively Americanism all the time. He is a very distinctive individuality, but his character is as American as his talent. Mr. Ayer cares nothing whatever for tradition and he just hates rules.

" As I have told you," he says, " I am just a composer. If I were an expert in harmony and counterpoint, which I most certainly am not, I might write songs that were very correct, but I should probably not write songs that were very popular. Musicians have told me that the construction of my most popular songs is all wrong, but there it is. I believe in breaking rules once in a while. When I wrote ' Oh, You Beautiful Doll,' I added four bars to the refrain, making twenty instead of the usual sixteen. My New York publishers protested, but I insisted, and what I did then has since been copied by far better musicians than myself.

" The refrain is the most important part of a song, and ought to be as simple as possible. I want the audience to leave the theatre whistling my refrains, and I know that they will not do it unless the refrains *are* simple. If the refrain is longer than usual, then length must be modified by two other things. There must be a striking feature in the middle, either a catch-phrase or a change of metre, and there must be a strong original finish. I believe enormously in repetition. I like to start my refrain with

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the principal theme, repeat it in the middle, and repeat it again at the end.

"Nine times out of ten, the music for my verses is evolved from the melody of the refrain, which I always write first. As regards repetition, it may be remembered that the words 'Oh, You Beautiful Doll' are repeated five times in the refrain of that song.

"I do all my compositions in the early hours of the morning, often getting up as early as five or six o'clock and working for two or three hours and then going back to bed again. I find it quite impossible to do original work either in the afternoons or evenings. I never write a song at the piano. My songs are always written while I am walking round the room, with a piano in it for reference. I do not write either the words or the music first; the first job is to get the metre, which in its early stages would probably sound to an outsider like a cannibal dance! Of course I start with the idea of the song, and I try then to arrive at a metre which suits the subject. The metre of a song should give to the words the inflection that they would have if they were spoken. If this conversational tone is conveyed by the music, the melody must exactly suit the meaning of the words. In the construction of a melody there are, of course, a thousand ways of writing the same thing, and my idea is to write everything in a new way, keeping a surprise up my sleeve for the last bars.



"Comic songs are the hardest of all to write, for every note must fit every word and particular attention must be paid to inflection.

"Successful songs run in cycles. There are generally two chapters in the history of every popular song, the original and the copy, and sometimes the copy is the greater success. If one looks back on the history of popular songs during the past twenty years, it will be found that every two years or so a new type of song has been evolved, and when I say a new type of song, I mean that a new kind of rhythm has been used, and it is the composer who is able to compose new rhythms who enjoys continued success.

"Personally, I do not know what is meant by inspiration. I have already explained that I keep my mind on the public and my eyes on what is happening in the outside world. It is a great mistake to be affected by drawing-room success. Many songs sound fine when they are played in your own home, but they are hopeless failures on the stage. Lots of people ask which is the more important—the words or the tune? Both have their importance, but one thing is certain. They do not whistle the words.

"The great trouble that the popular composer has to face is that both on the English and American stages there are so few performers nowadays who can really sing. The average musical comedy voice contains about four notes. If you remember that, you will realize the handicap we are up against. Nearly all my songs are written in the range of one octave, which is about the limit of the human voice as it exists on the musical comedy stage. It is not so easy to be original in the compass of an octave, when it is remembered that at least a hundred songs are written now where one was written twenty-five years ago.

"If inspiration means a sudden idea coming to one, which enables the composer to write a song in five minutes, then I myself have been inspired twice. I wrote 'Oh, You Beautiful Doll' and 'If You Were the Only Girl in the World' just as one writes a letter. But that was only composing the songs. The hard work came afterwards, when the idea had to be elaborated and put

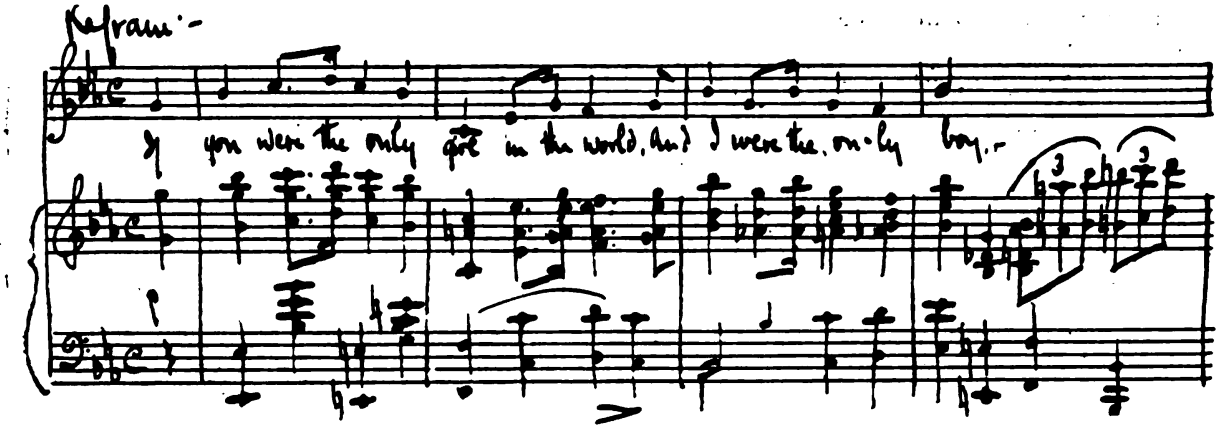
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on paper. That is the mechanical part of one's craft, and it has to be done in such a way that the public will recognize the touch which they have come to appreciate.

"Not being a musician, I know nothing about the science of orchestration. Still, I have orchestrated several of my compositions. The orchestration may not have been correct, but it sounded all right.

"Some time ago in London I wanted a certain passage played on the horns, and the musical conductor, a most talented musician, insisted that all the rules of harmony and counterpoint demanded that this particular passage should be played by the cornets. He proved his case absolutely. There was no sort of doubt that the cornets had the right to the passage, but I just wanted the horns—I insisted on the horns, and the horns gave me the tone which I believed was necessary for the sound of the song and which could never have been got from the poor old cornets.

"I am a great believer in counter melodies. When the song is played by an orchestra, these counter melodies should make or break it. In one of my songs, 'Dear Old Home of Mine,' four distinctive melodies are played by the orchestra at the same time. In the majority of my compositions I have three counter melodies. It is difficult to put these into a piano score, but I have been asked about them so often, that I have now arranged for them to be printed on these scores in small notes, which the ordinary pianist will soon learn to play."



I asked Mr. Ayer what differences he noted between the audiences in England and America.

"I think that the legitimate drama is on a higher plane in America than in England. But it is a curious fact that a large percentage of our best actors are English. In England, in many respects, musical comedy is on a higher plane. But there is this difference. In America the public has grown tired of the red-nosed comedian, and exaggerated make-up and grotesque costumes have been abandoned. After all, there is really no reason why a man should not make you laugh just as much if he is wearing dress clothes and speaks the lines of the piece. The author gets his chance in America: his words are spoken and the comedian is content to put his own humorous personality into his part and not to let the part be swamped by the personality. Very few people seem to realize that the war is responsible for the state of affairs that prevails in musical comedy theatres here.

"During the war it was very difficult to cast pieces, and there were comparatively few comedians left outside the army. The shows were necessarily built round one man, and the consequence was that one often went to the theatre for two and a half hours and practically saw one man all the time. I believe that the public is weary of these one-man shows, and the demand now is for a cast of all-round excellence. The difficulty is that the salaries of the principal comedians have reached such a high figure that the all-round cast has become almost impossible from a financial point of view, with the result that both authors and composers are handicapped and the productions remain on a mediocre level.

"Another handicap in this country is supplied by the lack of professionalism among the artistes. In France, and even in America, the stage is a profession to which men and women must give all their attention. Here it is generally an amusement not to be taken too seriously. Managers are entirely dependent on their 'stars,' much more, indeed, than on the authors and composers. If the leading lady does not like a song, another has to be written for her. If the leading comedian does not like a scene, it has to be cut out. In America the manager hands over the script or the words and the music of a song to the artiste and adds the brief injunction, 'Learn it.'

"And that is the better way!"

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A Colombo Night

By AUSTIN PHILIPS

Illustrated by E.G. OAKDALE

"I SHOULDN'T let it worry me too much, Miss Caldecott!"

"But I can't help it. He was the kindest man in Colombo. It's all too terrible. Good night!"

The girl turned away swiftly. Her late escort stayed still for a brief moment, watched her slim figure flash beneath the Norman-arched portico of the big white-washed building, turned to dismiss her rick-shaw, then climbed back into his own. Five seconds later the noiseless wheels were revolving again on the thick red dust of the roadway, while the dull thud-thud of the naked feet of the coolie broke soft on the hot night's calm.

And already the girl, Jean Caldecott, had passed through the convent-school door. To the left of the hall was the mistress's common sitting-room. She entered; and a woman looked up.

"What! Back, Jean!" she said, in a strong Scots accent which told of North of Edinburgh.

"Yes—it's perfectly awful. We broke up in the middle of dinner. Richard Baker has been killed!"

"Killed!"

"Yes, he didn't come to dinner, and the news came over the telephone that he'd been found at his office—stabbed. John Baker rushed down immediately. Mrs. Baker fainted. Her nieces stayed to look after her. We all came away!"

"Who brought you?"

"A new man—a friend of John Baker's—he's staying at the Galle Face Hotel. He seemed nice. But, of course, I couldn't talk to him. I felt sick, and shaken to bits!"

"I don't wonder. It's perfectly frightful. Richard Baker was such a good man, too. Who could have done it? A native——"

"No. A European!"

"Have they got him?"

"Not yet. But they've found a gold cuff-link. There had been a struggle. They think the motive was robbery—and that the murderer was disturbed!"

Miss Peebles nodded. The two women sat looking at each other: the Scotswoman kind, but sallow, with crisp, red, grey-going hair. Jean Caldecott was many years younger. She was beautiful and clearly temperamental. Life in Colombo—she was not saying "no" to its gaieties—had proved almost an unbalancing contrast to her Anglesey vicarage home.

"Charity will suffer," said Miss Peebles, presently. "So, too, will St. Ursula's. Have you told the Sisters?"

"Not yet. But——"

Jean stopped abruptly. Someone had entered—a woman, dressed in the robes of St. Ursula's Anglican Order, wearing a white hood and a long black scapulary, on the breast of which a crucifix hung.

She was known as Sister Rosemary, and was the junior of all the four Sisters who, with the help of a like number of mistresses, conducted this convent-school. Her eyes were blue and forget-me-not. Her figure was slim, and her long full robes did not, somehow, hide her gracefulness, but made her look taller than she was.

"There is a note for you, Jean," she said, putting down an envelope on the central teak-wood table. "A *podian* brought it. You're back early. You said you were going to be late!"

"I know, Sister. But there's been a dreadful murder. My host's brother has been found stabbed at his office. The news came during dinner. So, of course, I came back home!"

Sister Rosemary started. She was about —as it seemed—to ask a question; then

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checked herself, visibly: doubtless because she was determined to keep aloof from the outside world. But she looked at Jean sympathetically. The girl was the youngest of the teachers. The Superior rather frowned on her. But Sister Rosemary really seemed to love her, despite her butterfly trend.

"You look shaken, dear," she said. "I don't wonder. You had better get off to bed!"

"Yes, doesn't she!" Miss Peebles' kind voice seconded her. "You're perfectly right, Sister Rosemary. I'll take her up at once!"

The good Scotswoman put her arm round her junior colleague and led her out like a mother; but the Sister still lingered for a little in the cane-chaired, book-lined room. She rose, at the end of a few minutes, and went across the hall.

SHE first entered the Bureau—where all callers and visitors were always strictly interrogated—then passed into various apartments, to see if the lights had been extinguished, going finally to the white-washed chapel at the extreme end of the veranda, where she closed and locked the door. The other members of the Order had retired to rest already. Their last "offices" had been said.

Sister Rosemary—on account of certain duties—alone had a bedroom downstairs. The dormitories of the pupils (children of high-caste natives) and the rooms of the remaining adults were all on an upper floor.

Sister Rosemary's room was very cell-like. There were only two things on the wall. One was a crucifix. The other was a tiny looking-glass; and the bed was hard and narrow. On one side of it stood a writing-table; on the other an *almirah*—or manner of small wardrobe with hanging-cupboard and shelves.

She showed no haste to unrobe herself. So far from seeking slumber, she seemed but now to have awaked.

Her demeanour had strangely altered, from the moment she had first closed the door.

She had ceased to be the Religious. Her hood and cap were off, and she had begun to brush her short hair—which was like spun silk of bronze colour—before the wall-hung glass. Anyone who had seen her so employed would have felt quite positive that she was meant not for monachal seclusion but rather for motherhood and love.

She walked, presently, to a door which had wooden slats in it and which opened on to the veranda which ringed the building round. She pushed it open and looked out into the garden. There was no moon, though the night was luminous with star-shine. The day had been hot, insufferably, but now a little breeze—as light as a woman's sigh, sometimes—caressed the tops of the palms.

Sister Rosemary was standing half in the light and half out of it, but there could be no one there to see. Palings ringed the compound, and the lower portion of the building was invisible from the roadway. An immense tranquillity reigned over all the city, broken only at intervals by the tuff-tuff of a motor-horn, telling of returning diners, or of a man and a girl, joy-riding, in search of a slender breath of air.

Sister Rosemary sighed and closed the door again and stepped back into the room. She seemed completely transformed, now. She was no longer the dutiful Sister—most patient among all the small community; gentle and content, even upon days of greatest heat and extremest tropical discomfort. Rather had she become again the woman: one who at heart had not relinquished the reasonable loves of this world.

She opened the *almirah*. From the back of one of the shelves of it she drew out a tiny little box. It contained a signet-ring. This she put slowly on the middle finger of her white and delicate left hand.

She turned the hand this way and that way, always looking at the ring. Then she kissed the collet. Again—not once but many times—she pondered her reflection in the tiny wall-hung glass.

FOR an hour—between nine and ten every night of her life at the Convent—Sister Rosemary ceased to be a Sister of St. Ursula's convent-school.

She ought never to have become one. It had been a most tragical piece of foolishness. She was born, indubitably, for wedded love and motherhood. But Misfortune had touched her with its wand.

She had lived in Kent—at Beckenham. She had belonged to an old sporting Stock Exchange family: she had been engaged to a member of just such a similar clan. He had played cricket for school, university, county, and Gentlemen of England; was a fine amateur actor, and—himself established in Throgmorton Street—was like to do very well.

But he had been in too great a hurry. In his intense desire to make money, he had speculated rashly, had lost very heavily, had been "hammered" and promptly repudiated by his *fiancée's* family and his own.

Sister Rosemary—Rosemary Thorold—had suffered very greatly. She had been devoted to Gerald Farnall, and had turned to Religion in his stead. Heredity impelled her, beyond question. Her mother's father had been a very High Church clergyman; herself, one of those beings who must give

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"'Rosemary!' said the man. 'Rosemary, I've found you. Oh, thank God!'"

either everything or nothing, she insisted on renouncing the world.

She had become a member of St. Ursula's, a famous Anglican Sisterhood. After two years' hard novitiate at headquarters in mid-England, she had been sent to this Colombo convent-school. She had proved efficient and successful. She was loved by the whole community. Even the hard and cold Superior had a tender spot in her heart for her. She never lost her serenity in the trying tropical heat.

And this was only possible because of what happened after nine. For an hour, always, she let her Buried Life resuscitate, and gave herself over to dreams.

TO-NIGHT, some sigh of the wind, perhaps; some sound; some scent, possibly; some unstruck note of music; some chord of memory, striking "that electric chain" which "darkly binds" all humans, made her burden even harder than before. She remembered her lover's kisses. The world called loud and compellingly. Of instinct she held out her arms to it; then dropped them again in despair.

She had made a mistake. She had become a Sister upon impulse because she had been too sensitive to let the world see her grief. She had wanted, at all costs, to hide herself; to find for her heart, so wounded, kindliest silence and shade.

Now she was a prisoner; one with a life-long sentence, who would never return to the world. Pride would stay her: she could never face those people who had sought, first, to deter her, who had afterwards withstood and forbidden her, and who, ultimately, had yielded with a "you'll regret this later on!" She would remain out here—losing her youth and hiding her beauty in this terrible tropical climate, till it pleased the Head of the Order to send her on service elsewhere.

She glanced at her watch. It was nearly ten o'clock now; the hour of dreams was almost ended; she must rise at five for chapel; she was about to get ready for bed. Suddenly she started. It seemed to her that she had heard someone moving in the garden among the palms.

She stood listening intently. She heard nothing, sighed relievedly, turned towards the *almirah*, and—about to restore it to its hiding-place—drew the signet-ring from her hand.

Then she heard the movement once more.

And a footstep sounded on the veranda; and through the slats which took the place of panels in the wooden door which opened on to it, she heard her half-hissed name.

"Rosemary!"

And, even though they came to her thus whispered, she knew the voice and tone. She started back, tottered, recovered herself, stood hesitant; then, obedient blindly to an impulse, unlocked the outer door.

In another couple of seconds a man was standing at her side.

He wore evening dress. He was dark and strikingly handsome, vigorous and athletic and clean-limbed.

Sister Rosemary turned the key as though by instinct, and then turned back into the room. She stood perfectly silent for a little while, and then gasped out a name.

"Gerald!" she said. "Gerald!"

"Rosemary!" said the man. "Rosemary, I've found you. Oh, thank God!"

She nodded. Her vows were forgotten. She was woman, and starving for love. She put out passionate arms to him. But he only caught a hand.

"Rosemary. I came to look for you. I climbed the palings. I saw you at your door. I crept through the compound. I'm terribly in need of your help."

"My help!"

"Yes—where can you hide me? It's a question of my life!"

"Your life!"

"Yes. I killed somebody—a man named Baker. We quarrelled about business. He took down a horsewhip. And I stabbed him in hot blood!"

"What?"

"Yes. I killed him. I escaped, but they are certain to discover me. Unless you can hide me, I shall inevitably be hanged!"

THEY stood looking at each other, this man and this woman who had loved devotedly in England, who had been truly mated, eternally meant for each other, who had been separated only by the consequences of his haste to make her a home. Then impulsively she flung her arms round him and knew—passionate as were her kisses—a miraculous sense of peace. She was aware, too, of a yet more marvellous *soulagement*, at variance utterly with the calamitous circumstances of their meeting and the tragic nature of his deed.

Then, presently, she half released herself and stood again looking at him, with tenderness, protectiveness, and dread. And the fact that she had taken vows and belonged to the strictest of Anglican Sisterhoods, and that he—a man and a murderer—was in her bedroom, did not seem to matter at all.

"Yes, I'll hide you," she said. "I have charge of the linen-closet. There's a big press there, that will take you. I'll feed you—and somehow, presently, you must manage to get away. I can dress you in my clothes. I can—oh, quick, come this way!"

She caught up a key-ring; then turned the

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"'Who is this gentlemen?' demanded the Sister Superior. 'How did he get here? It is no use telling lies!'"

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inner door-handle very noiselessly. The passage and entire ground floor were in darkness, but she knew every inch of the ground. She grasped his hand and led him, tiptoeing forward, towards the little room which held the linen, just beyond the central stairs. She alone had need to go there. In its largest press he would be safe.

Almost they had reached this refuge. But, five yards from it, she stopped dead. Footsteps had sounded on the bare and uncarpeted central staircase, and the faint click of wooden heels.

Sister Rosemary's fingers stiffened within the fingers of the man. She drew in her breath. She knew what next must happen. A switch snapped. Light flashed into the long corridor. Accessory and principal, momentarily blinded, were aware of the figure of a girl.

IT was Jean Caldecott. Her hair was in twin black pig-tails. She was wearing a kimono of pink.

The light, in its sudden brightness, for a little while blinded her, too.

"Oh, Sister Rosemary," she began, presently. "I was so frightened about that dreadful murder. I couldn't sleep. I had to come down for a novel. You're up late. Are you frightened? Oh, who's that man?"

The three of them stood motionless, regarding one another: Sister Rosemary, and her whilom *fiancé*, and this charming, dark-haired girl. On the Sister's face was sheer terror; on the man's, as it seemed to be, stupor; on the face of Jean Caldecott not fear but great amaze.

And of the protagonists of this drama it was the girl who first found voice.

"Why, it's Mr. Farnall!" she said, bewilderedly. "He brought me back from the John Bakers' interrupted dinner-party. Have you got news for me—or a message from my cousins? Is the murderer found?"

Silence followed her questions: silence profound and absolute; Gerald Farnall and his protectress stood absolutely dumb. Then it seemed that he was ready with some subterfuge, for he opened his lips to reply.

But his words remained unspoken, even though his lips were not shut. There had been the sound—the sharp, snapped sound—of an upstairs door closing, and feet sounded plain on the stairs.

And, just above the three of them, one hand upon the banisters and one hand raising slightly the skirt of her long white habit, stood Sister Elizabeth—the Sister Superior of St. Ursula's convent-school.

Her cold eyes rested on Jean Caldecott. Then she recognized Sister Rosemary. Her brows went up at the sight.

"What is the matter?" she began in cold, severe tones and deliberate. "Sister Rosemary——"

She stopped. She had seen Gerald Farnall. And the hand which had rested on the banister gripped it tightly, and the other hand went to her brow.

She took barely ten seconds to recover. She drew herself up to the full height of her fine and well-formed figure and addressed not Sister Rosemary but the trembling, wondering Jean.

"Who is this gentleman?" she demanded.

"I don't know. At least, I *do* know. He was introduced to me by Mrs. Baker. He took me into dinner. He brought me home afterwards——"

"And you brought him into this building!"

"*No!*"

"Then how did he get here? It is no use telling lies!"

Jean Caldecott gazed at her bewilderedly. She had a nervous Celtic strain in her: the appalling accusation had bemused and deprived her of breath. Sister Elizabeth stayed regarding her fixedly. She thought the girl fast. She knew she was a first-class teacher; but the girl now dined out often, and letters perpetually came for her: notes and letters on Colombo club paper, as it seemed from a number of men. The Superior had long been suspicious that Jean was leading a gay life.

And now Jean's stammered sentence only made things worse.

"I don't *know*, Sister. I couldn't sleep, and I came downstairs to get a novel out of the common-room. And I saw Sister Rosemary in the hall with Mr. Farnall——"

"What!"

The Superior took a step forward. She looked at the girl quite fiercely: overbearing, rather, like so many women who have authority, her wrath was deeply moved. The lie (as she held it) made her furious; the implication which came with it stirred her to a passionate rage. Sister Rosemary was accused, in effect, of harbouring this lover: Sister Rosemary, a *dévote* of the Order. It was almost as though Jean Caldecott had accused some Ivory Tower.

And her voice, which could be kind—and was often so—now came cold and cruel: filled, indeed, with something which was very much kin to hate.

"Jean, that is sufficient. You will leave this house at daybreak. I myself will conduct you to the P. and O. offices: a boat is due, I know. I will communicate fully with your father. I am sorry, indeed, that such a man should be so troubled by the misconduct of such a child!"

The girl still looked at her bewilderedly. Her hands went to her head. Her breast

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was heaving. She could not manage to find breath.

"But I——"

She could compass no more. Three-parts fainting, she half fell, half leaned against the wall of the matted corridor; this thunderbolt of accusation, culminating in unjust conviction, making her utterly spent. She stayed dumb and drawing breath difficultly. It was Sister Rosemary who found words.

"Sister, it was not Jean who brought this man here!"

"Who was it, then?"

"I!"

"You!"

"Yes. He was once engaged to me—in England. He came to my window—through the compound. We had some conversation. I was just going to let him out!"

There was a long and terrible silence. In it Sister Elizabeth considered Sister Rosemary, whom she had loved secretly with a strength found sometimes in such natures as are three-parts cold and severe.

And then she beckoned to Gerald Farnall to follow her to the door.

She opened it. He paused upon the threshold and looked back at Sister Rosemary, who stood transfixed and rigid, with eyes of tenderness and fear. Then he passed out—out into that road along which his rickshaw had brought him, beside Jean Caldecott's rickshaw, some ninety minutes ago.

The door was shut and bolted upon him. Slowly and majestically, Sister Elizabeth returned to the terrified pair.

"Jean," she said, quietly, "I did you an injustice, child. You are looking dreadfully shaken. Go and get to bed!"

Jean obeyed, and ascended the staircase. Once—shaken and bewildered—she paused for a second, to glance back again at the two women in the corridor who were standing full in the light. The younger of them looked white as alabaster—and as if she had received a death sentence or had had speech with Death himself.

As for Sister Elizabeth, she showed something—nay, much—of that cruelty which men and women are apt to show—not unnaturally—to those they have loved and have had faith in, and whom they have found out in direst deceit.

"Sister Rosemary," she said, "you have broken your vows and have brought grave scandal on us. I cannot excommunicate you from the Order. I can only expel you from this house. Go to your bedroom. To-morrow morning I will myself book a passage for you, and see you on board the first boat."

Her hearer looked at her, motionless; then seemed, for a fraction of a second, as though about to tell all. But she turned, and went obediently to her bedroom and fell beside the bed upon her knees. Her heart galloped. Her whole body shook with terror. It was not with terror for herself.

She prayed feverishly, hysterically, for a miracle—for the gift of escape for her man. She knew, at heart, it was impossible. Yet she implored high heaven to grant it—and never thought of herself. She did not remember—as yet, at any rate—that she had lost her love and the work which had helped her to forgetfulness; and that, certain of expulsion from the Sisterhood, she had nothing left her in this world.

But prayer was not enough: she needed action; thought and wish developed towards deed. She must go out. She must see what had become of him: she must save him—save him, somehow, even at this, the eleventh hour. She rose, to set out to seek him, to fare forth to the roadway through the compound—and, actually as she rose, was stayed. For, once more, Gerald Farnall's voice came to her through the slats which served as upper panel to the wooden veranda door.

"Rosemary. Are you back again? I can see a light in your room!"

In a second she had the door open: in another he was in, and it was closed. She gasped relief. Fear gave her quick invention; she snatched a garment from the wall. She tore open the *almirah*. She drew out articles of clothing. In another couple of minutes Gerald Farnall stood before her wearing the coif and scapulary and habit of St. Ursula's Anglican nuns.

"I can't hide you here," she said, breathlessly. "I am disgraced. I am being sent home by the Superior. But in the native quarter there is someone—a Tamil man, whose child I cured of fever when the doctors had given it up. I shall tell him we've quarrelled with the Superior and are anxious to get back to England, and have only got money for one. He will lend me enough—I am sure of it—to buy a passage for you. In the morning, go straight to the offices. I shall be on the boat before lunch-time. But to-night I must get back here!"

He nodded. She caught up a small suitcase and filled it with garments very speedily. She gave it him, then ran to the room door—the inner one. It was locked, and she took out the key.

She opened the door on to the veranda and signed to him to pass through it. He obeyed her. In another half minute they were crossing the compound, towards a little back gate. The place was reputed snake-haunted, and had always filled her with terror. But in face of her loved one's danger she crossed it without hesitation as it might have been a garden at home.

They reached the gate and emerged from

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"In the forefront, handcuffed to two of them, was a tall, thin man dressed in ducks.

it. They were out in the star-lighted path. They turned towards the town: he, carrying the suit-case, she, beside him to guard him, breathless with fear and hope. The empty red-dust roadway led them past bright-lighted bungalows, amid palms and flamboyants in flower.

Then she thrust out her arm before his body and herself stopped suddenly short.

"What's that?" she whispered, fearfully. "Oh, Gerald, what's that?"

He stood beside her, listening. Voices had broken on the silence. Ahead, down a road which joined their own road at right angles must be coming a number of men. The voices now were articulate. She could distinguish Tamil words.

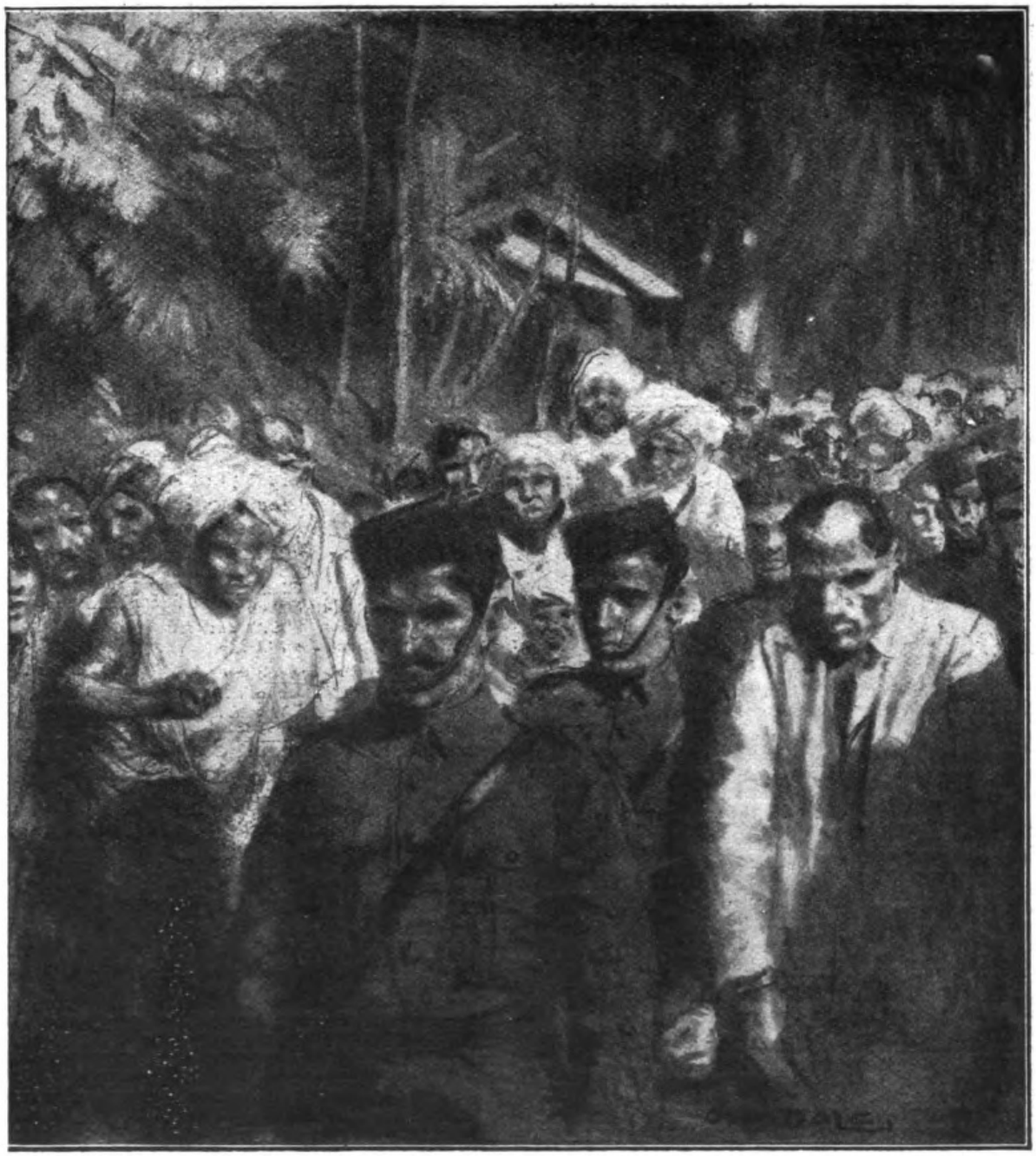
"It's all right. They're natives," she said, happily. "Gerald, dear, let us go on!"

They advanced. A crowd of men met them, debouching from that right-angled side road. The moon was up, now. It was as bright as daylight. The pair beheld a *cortège.*

And those who led it wore the navy-blue serge uniforms and round forage caps of the Ceylon native police.

In the forefront, handcuffed to two of them, was a tall, thin man dressed in ducks.

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Sister Rosemary staggered. 'Gerald,' she gasped, 'tell me, what does it mean?'"

Behind followed sergeants with bicycles and a motley crowd of natives. They were wearing loin-cloths and their hair was long and loose, or tightly drawn behind their heads in bun-fashion, and loose wraps covered their shoulders and their legs and feet were bare.

As the party passed the couple, a car swung down the roadway. It contained a native police-surgeon whose children were being educated at St. Ursula's convent-school.

At the sight of Sister Rosemary he pulled up for a moment.

"Good evening," he said. "You're out late. Good works, I take it! I'm sorry official business prevents me from offering you a lift. We've got poor Mr. Baker's murderer—a discharged half-caste clerk!"

He passed on. Sister Rosemary staggered. She was taken in strong, quick arms.

"Gerald!" she gasped. "Gerald! Did you hear what that native doctor said to me? Tell me, what does it mean?"

"It means that they've got the man who killed poor Baker."

"The murderer!"

"Yes."

She raised her face and stood looking at him. His eyes were gay and smiling. A

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great thrill—a thrill of happiness which was instinctive but which yet seemed to her inexplicable—passed, now, through all her frame.

'Gerald," she murmured, somehow. "Gerald, then you didn't kill Mr. Baker!"

"You know I didn't!"

"You're not the murderer?"

"Of course I'm not!"

"What are you, then?"

"Your deliverer—the man who saw and seized his chance—his only chance in the whole world—of seeing you and of getting your own dear goodness to make you untrue to your vows!"

She stared at him—stared at him ecstatically. Light had come to her: light from Cimmerian darkness. She began from that moment to realize the full significance of his speech.

The Superior had expelled her. The Head of the Order would excommunicate her. She was free to re-enter the world.

And the words of her lover, ere his lips found and fastened on her lips, made her perfectly, rapturously sure.

"Yes. I am your deliverer. I have made good again in England. I came out a month ago on business. And to-morrow I am taking you—*home!*"

ACROSTICS.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 82.

(The Fourth of the Series.)

THE fortress quit, sail west across the bay,
And spend at two a happy holiday.

1. Of late, at famous Eastern place,
We owned defeat, but not disgrace.

2. Blow, blow, thou wintry wind: to some
From thy sharp tooth good yet may come.

3. Was shot for cowardice, but men
Were vehement politicians then.

4. A thing—most useful on the soil;
A person—spends but will not toil.

5. 'Tis here, unless my knowledge fail,
You often find the luscious quail.

6. The priestly tribe ordained to bless,
Transposed becomes all wickedness.

7. The word implies both broken heart,
And mourner's garments torn apart.

8. Cut off one woman's head and feet:
Here is another, quite complete.

9. My summer's gastronomic dream,
I wonder—shall I get the cream?

KING COLE.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 83.

THEIR sum must be exactly twenty-three,
And one is what their difference must be.

1. A weight or weed, the sound suggesting rent,
Though not the kind that cash will represent.

2. From Continental town the tail must go;
The rest, translated, will this meaning show.

3. Musician or four-footed beast will tell
Of criminal who bore this name as well.

4. 'Tis less than nothing, but a plant or bird
Will clearly show this fraction of a word.

5. Perambulator, growler, tumbril, sleigh,
Automobile, tram, go-cart, wagon, dray.

6. Fair is her head, and she has more than one,
And in the butter you may see her son.

PAX.

Answers to Acrostics 82 and 83 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE STRAND MAGAZINE, Southampton Street, Strand, London, W.C.2, and must arrive not later than by the first post on June 8th.

The solution to each acrostic must be on a separate piece of paper and both must be signed with the solver's pseudonym. Two answers are permitted for each light.

ANSWER TO No. 81.

1.	C	ar	P
2.	A	st	I
3.	N	i	L
4.	T	ig	G
5.	E	we	R
6.	R	ikk	I
7.	B	ea	M
8.	U.	S.	A.
9.	R	a	G
10.	Y	ok	E

NOTES.—Light 2. Aits, islands. 3. Nil, nothing; French name of Nile. 4. "Martin Chuzzlewit." 5. The firm of Novello, music publishers, used to be Novello, Ewer, and Co. 6. "The Jungle Book." Or, Rikki-tikki-tavi. 8. An American town, as Utica, would also do. 10. Instrument, pair.

RESULT OF THE THIRTEENTH SERIES.

THE maximum number of points obtainable during the series was 42. Five solvers—out of some six hundred entrants—were correct throughout; these five—Cyno, Lobo, Peci, Pete, and Wals—will receive cheques for £1 16s. each. Forest is the only solver who scored 41, and he wins a prize of £1 10s. Two solvers, Darnlinvarach and Splosh, missed two lights only, and are awarded prizes of a guinea each. All other competitors failed in more than two lights.

The eight successful solvers will be ineligible for prizes during the fourteenth series, now running. They are: Cyno, Mr. Cyril Norman, 28, Duke's Avenue, New Malden, Surrey; Lobo, Mrs. L. Morris, 74, Larch Road, Cricklewood, N.W.2; Peci, Mr. G. E. Matthews, 53, Stockwell Green, S.W.9; Pete, Mr. H. F. Samman, 10, Foxholes Road, Southbourne-on-Sea; Wals, Mr. W. Stradling, Norris Hill, East Cowes, I.W.; Forest, Mr. P. E. Herrick, 49A, Tremaine Road, Anerley, S.E.20; Darnlinvarach, Major Drummond, Falcon Lodge, Putney, S.W.15; Splosh, Mr. L. Dale, Christ's Hospital, Horsham, Sussex.

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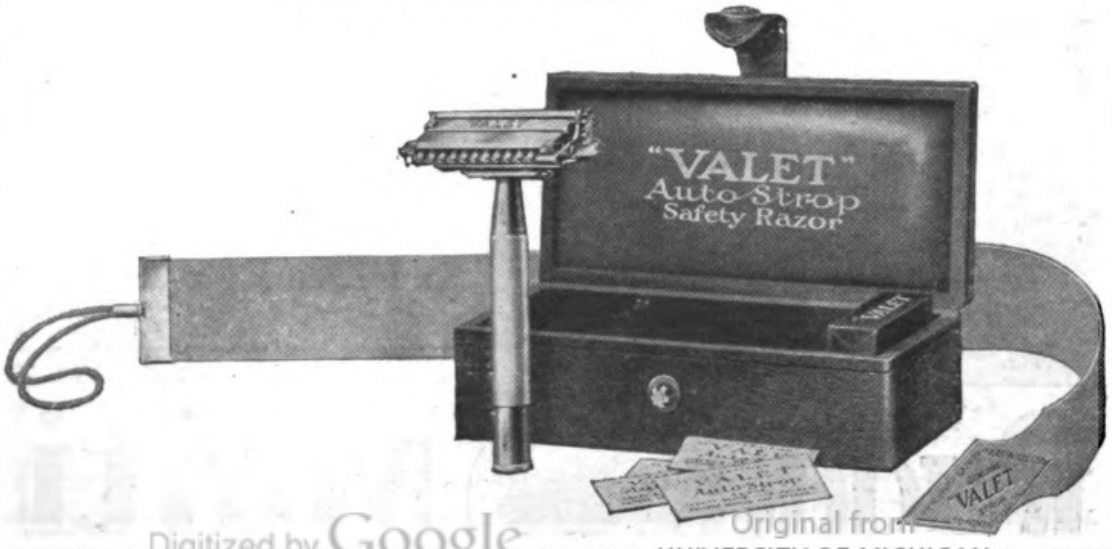
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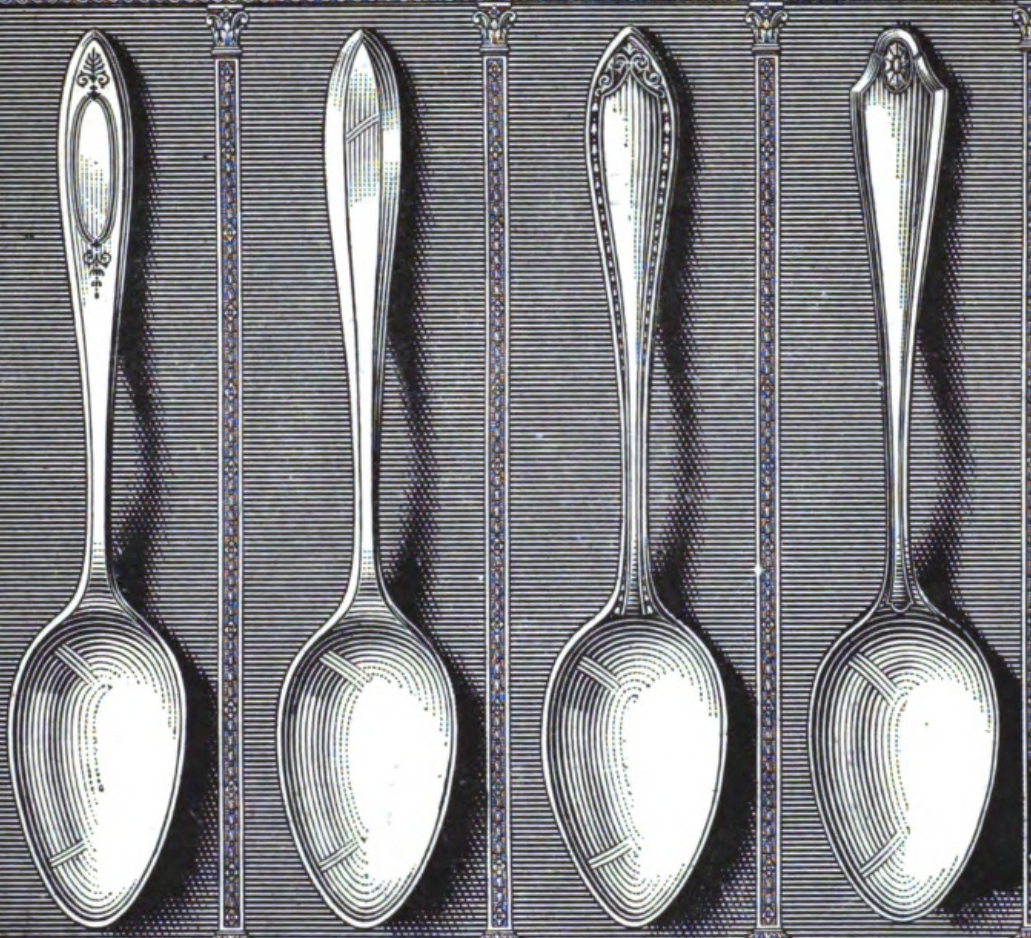
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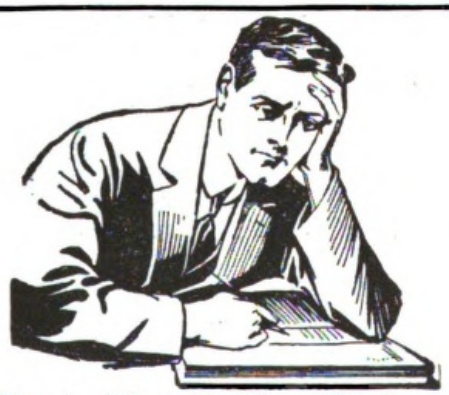
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EVERY year the "StyleCraft" popularity grows as more and more men prove that "StyleCraft" is the cheapest wear they can get in well-tailored sports coats and flannel trousers. Consider the prices and then remember that every "StyleCraft" garment has this definite guarantee: "If this garment fails to satisfy or to wear, we will replace it free through your dealer."

Get "StyleCraft" white flannel trousers for cricket or tennis, they are specially cut to give plentiful room.

For young men and those who feel young.

Every man can get a perfect fitting in "StyleCraft." There are 72 sizes in the trousers, starting 30 waist, and rising every inch to 42 waist. Leg measures for each waist, 27 in. to 32 in. when turned up. 33 sizes in the coats (long, short and medium). Two new coats :—

BARRINGTON.

A smart model with inverted pleat in the back, and three-quarter belt. It has three pockets with flaps, and inside breast and ticket pockets.

ARRAN.

A smart coat with three patch pockets —the two side pockets are pleated. The back has a half belt stitched down. Of good wearing serviceable tweed in various designs.



PRICES.

Men's Tweed Sports Coats	37/6 to 63/-
Men's Grey Flannel Trousers	PER PAIR 22/6 to 45/-
Men's White Flannel Trousers	PER PAIR 19/- to 42/-

There is a "StyleCraft" agent in every town that has a population of 2,000 or over. If any difficulty is found in obtaining "StyleCraft," write direct to the Sole Manufacturers—

STYLECRAFT LIMITED,
STYLECRAFT WORKS,
CONWAY ROAD, LEEDS.

Stores retailing STYLECRAFT Goods in Malta, Egypt, East Africa, South Africa, France, Canada, and South America.

St. James's 12

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For Beautiful Floors

BEAUTIFUL FLOORS are largely a matter of prevention—the great secret is to put them in perfect condition—and then *keep* them that way. Doorways, stairs, and other parts receiving hard usage should be polished frequently. This requires no great amount of time or effort if the proper finish is used.

JOHNSON'S

(PASTE—LIQUID—POWDERED)

PREPARED WAX

Johnson's Prepared Wax Paste is the proper finish for floors of all kinds - wood, tile, marble, composition, and linoleum. It does not show scratches or heel-prints—and floors polished with it can easily be kept in perfect condition. Worn spots can be re-waxed without going over the entire floor.

Use Johnson's Prepared Wax Liquid for polishing your furniture, leather goods, woodwork, and motor-cars. It imparts a hard, dry, velvety polish of great beauty and durability. Johnson's Wax forms a thin, protecting coat over the varnish, similar to the service rendered by a piece of plate glass over a desk or dresser-top.

FOR A PERFECT DANCING SURFACE—Just Sprinkle Johnson's Powdered Wax over any floor. The feet of the dancers will spread the wax, polishing the floor, and immediately put it in perfect condition for dancing.

In 2/6, 4/-, 8/-, and 14/6 sizes.

Your dealer has "JOHNSON'S"—don't accept a substitute.

S. C. JOHNSON & SON,

WEST DRAYTON,
MIDDLESEX.

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The Secret is in this Free Book

3,000 BARGAINS AT NEXT TO FACTORY PRICES

Your address on a postcard to H. Samuel, 31, Market St., Manchester, will bring you the key to remarkable saving! Write now for H. Samuel's

FREE BOOK OF 3,000 BARGAINS!

It is packed from cover to cover with the finest bargains ever offered in exquisite Jewellery, Watches, etc., at money-saving next to

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COLONIAL ORDERS *receive the prompt attention of a special manager. Catalogue mailed free.*

GOLD GEM PENDANT. Charming design, set with fine Pearls and Amethysts. **21/-**

GIPSY RING. Fine Diamond in handsomely finished Gold Gipsy setting. **95/-**

CROSS-OVER RING. Three perfectly matched Diamonds. **£5**

FINE TABLET RING. Perfectly cut Emerald surrounded by Diamonds. **£9**

NEW DESIGN. 3 Pave cut Rubies and 4 Diamonds in new setting. **£10**

SILVER WRISTLET WATCH. Fashionable design. Lever movement, 15 jewels. Reliable timekeeper. **84/-**

GENT'S SILVER LEVER. 15-jewelled lever movement, compensation balance, handsomely engine-turned Silver case. **57/6**

EXQUISITE GOLD BROOCH. Set with Pearls and Aquamarine centre. **21/-**

ELEGANT BRACELET WATCH. Beautifully finished in Rolled Gold. 15-jewelled lever movement. Perfect timekeeper. **65/-**

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Over 81 Branches including:

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40 & 42, Powis Street, Woolwich.
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BRISTOL: 2 & 37, Wine St	**NOTTINGHAM:** 31, Long Row.
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DOCTOR LAWYER MERCHANT CLERK

K.I. Shorthand Helps Them All

Master it in 5 evenings

The Merchant

saves time in taking orders over telephone; quickly makes notes of new merchandise needed to replenish stocks; jots down ideas for advertising or instructions for clerks as they occur to him. Takes notes of matters needing attention as he goes on inspection of store or plant.

The Salesman

jots down suggestions to be forwarded to home office that occur while on trains, in hotels, etc. Composes letters to be sent to customers when transcribed later. Puts down inspirational or business-getting ideas as he comes across them. Makes note of complaints or wishes of customers which may be sent to home office verbatim.

The Lawyer

makes marginal notes when preparing briefs, etc., for elaboration later. Records statements of clients verbatim when presence of stenographer is inadvisable. Phone memos can be made fast as the other person talks. Sets down appointments or remarks on desk calendar which would be unintelligible to others.

The Physician

can transcribe communications of a private nature from patients into K. I. Shorthand, destroy originals and still have word-for-word record for own use. Write down main points in patient's statement in order to help diagnosis or make accurate permanent card record of ailments.

The Journalist

can write down complete interviews verbatim. Prepare his story as fast as he can think while en route to office. Make quick notes while looking up data or information for articles or treatises.

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K. I. Shorthand meets all requirements for taking dictation or for any other function of a private secretary where shorthand is demanded. Our system will enable any young man or woman to enter this field as a competent stenographer in a surprisingly short period. Thus it is the stepping-stone to greater opportunities.

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K. I. Shorthand offers a big money-making career to any woman entering the field of business. It is mastered with such remarkable ease that it obviates the wearisome toil and discouraging preparation between the birth of ambition and the day of realization.



HERE is shorthand simplified and made available for everybody.

If you write letters or literature, make memoranda, or get ideas which should be jotted down, you need K. I. Shorthand.

K. I. Shorthand is for the busy man or woman—the person with pen or pencil always handy—to whom time saved in setting down things is important.

K. I. Shorthand fraction-izes longhand writing. It eliminates the labour and brain-fag. Hence, you like to use pen or pencil oftener, thus saving many thoughts deserving to be recorded, any one of which would perhaps pay the trifling cost of learning the system many times over.

The New Simplified Stenography

Big executives have long realized the advantages accruing from a knowledge of shorthand. W. E. Barnes, Hugh Chalmers; Edward Bok, the famous editor; Frank A. Vanderlip, and President Wilson use shorthand in their daily affairs.

K. I. Shorthand is unlike any other system. It is shorthand simplified, clarified, pruned down to its merest essentials. You can learn it in five evenings at your own home, just as thousands of others have done.

30 Days' Approval

K. I. Shorthand is practical, and meets every requirement. It covers a great range of service. It is in daily use in business offices—taught as standard shorthand in progressive business schools. Clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and teachers find it indispensable. In our Army abroad it shortens the transmission of vital messages. On ships and coastal radio stations it catches the urgent whispers of the wireless.

K. I. Shorthand has made good wherever tested. It can make good in your service, too.

Put it to work now. Post the coupon, and directly you will be writing in K. I. Shorthand. Once learned it is never forgotten. So self-explanatory you can read your notes months or years old.

Let us send you the first lessons gratis. If you are interested, and wish to continue, we will forward the whole course on approval for 30 days. If not convinced there is nothing to return, no bother, no expense. **Post the coupon to-day, or write mentioning "The Strand Magazine."**

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Betty Wilner invites you to taste her Wedding-Cake

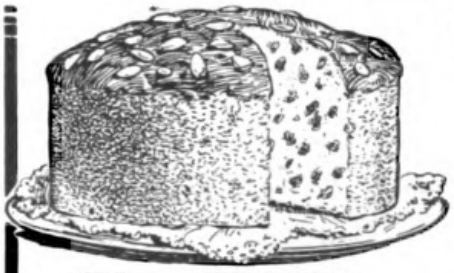
She will send you a generous portion post free for 4s. 9d.

The Wedding Cake illustrated weighs approximately 8½ lbs., and will be sent carefully packed and carriage paid to any part of the U.K. for **42/-.** Larger sizes (one to four tiers) quoted by return post.

Fresh from the Bakery to Your Table Post Free

Personal supervision at every stage of their making has made "Wilner" Cakes what they are.

"Wilner" Dundee Cake is chock-full of juicy, plump fruit, and the top is liberally sprinkled with choice, clean-cut almonds.



7/6, 10/6, 15/-, and 21/-

(Post Free)

according to size. Simply send cheque, P.O., or M.O. for the desired amount, and the Cake will come carefully packed and carriage paid by return.

Williman & Turner

The Modern Bakeries

West Norwood, London, S.E.27

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Onoto

THE Pen



When you see a Pillar Box, remember to get an ONOTO.

The Onoto is like the Pillar Box—always ready for your letters.

A twist with thumb and finger releases the ink, and the Onoto writes on without giving you a moment's worry. The Onoto fills itself, too, and when sealed by a turn of the hand it can no more leak than you can get your letter back after posting it.

And like the Pillar Box—the Onoto is a British Institution—made by De La Rue of London.

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO., Ltd.,
Bunhill Row, London, E.C.1.

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The World's Standard.

By Appointment.

They Always Turn Out Well.

Chivers' Jellies

FLAVOURED WITH RIPE FRUIT JUICES.

They are clear and beautiful when made ready for the table. The children's favourite dish.

GUARANTEED ABSOLUTELY PURE.



A Lady writes: "As a sweet for luncheon they are unsurpassed."

INSIST UPON HAVING CHIVERS' AND ACCEPT NO OTHER.

CHIVERS & SONS, Ltd., The Orchard Factory, HISTON, CAMBRIDGE.

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Fry's PURE BREAKFAST Cocoa



When You Rise -



Between Breakfast & Lunch -



When the clock strikes "One"



The Days Work Done



Bed Time

These are five splendid opportunities of adding to health and vigour by the enjoyment of rich fragrant "cups o' Fry's."
In hundreds of thousands of homes one golden rule of health is summed up in the words "a cup o' Fry's." Drink Fry's Cocoa—That's the way to start the day and end the day—the way to keep equal to any task. Keep Fry's Cocoa always handy. Easy to make; easy to digest; the best that experience can produce.



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WONDERFUL GAS AND FOOD SAVING INVENTION FOR EVERY HOME.

Greatly Reduces Household Expenses.

SAVES GAS.—SAVES FOOD.—SAVES MONEY.

FULL PARTICULARS FREE BY POST.

A hearty welcome is being extended to Housewives of all districts to the fascinating Demonstrations of an Invention which is revolutionizing Cooking in British Homes.

Thousands of Cubic feet less Gas consumption than in any previous quarter; Pounds saved in the weight of food cooked; delicious, tasty dishes that are a revelation of perfect culinary achievement; and the transformation of cooking from a tedious task into a positive pleasure. These are just some of the many revolutions effected by the new Multicooker Home Cookery Invention that is to help combat the increasing cost of living, and which you can have in your home within a few days from now.

There is no difficulty in obtaining this new Invention, nor is there the slightest trouble in fixing it. You can, in fact, commence to use it within five minutes of its delivery at your door. The cost is from a few shillings upwards, according to the number to be catered for, and every hour it is used it is Saving housekeeping expenses, time and trouble in a marvellous manner.

THE SECRET OF THE MULTI-COOKER.

The Multicooker is not an elaborate apparatus. It is perfectly simple and common-sense. It enables all your cooking, etc., to be done on ONE gas ring of average consumption, instead of the four or more which are usually employed to cook a meal on the ordinary gas stove. Other models are specially made for use with oil.

The Multicooker Invention is already installed in thousands of homes, and is everywhere saving Gas, saving Food, saving Money, and making cooking the easiest and most pleasant of household tasks. In the Mayfair mansions as well as in the smallest cottage, the Multicooker has scored an instant success by eliminating gas waste. It cooks everything, from one simple homely dish to a many-course dinner for ten to twenty people—never more than ONE gas burner, with an average consumption costing 1½d. per hour, being used at any time.

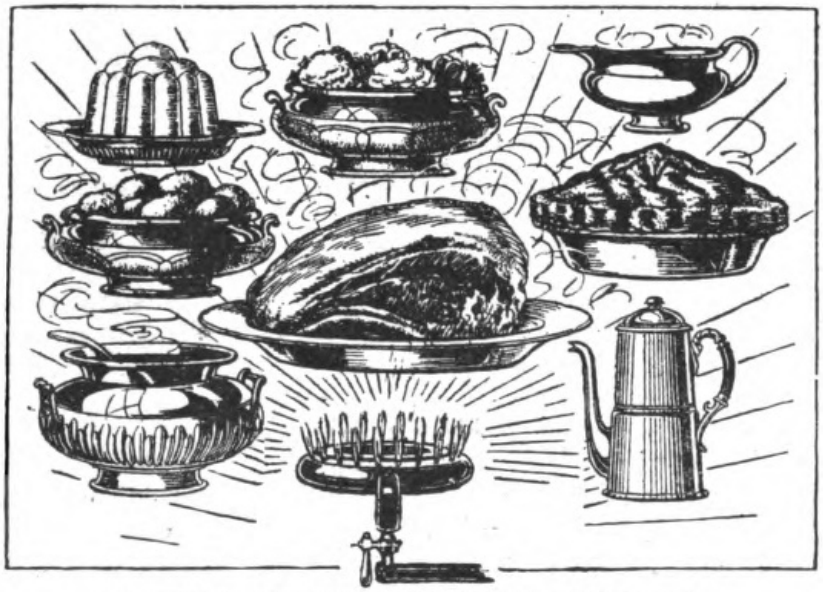
The reason why it saves so much is because on the ordinary gas stove or coal range a very big percentage of the heat is absolutely wasted. You can prove this in any gas stove, for instance, by putting your hand near the side of a kettle or saucepan on the gas ring. You feel intense heat, which is not helping the boiling in the least. But in the "Multicooker," the principle of heat conservation is so employed that splendid advantages are secured from the amount of gas burned.

FREE DEMONSTRATIONS DAILY.

Extraordinary public interest is being manifested in the remarkable Multicooker Demonstrations at 42, Berners Street, Oxford Street, in the heart of London's shopping centre. This fascinating exhibition is open daily from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M., and here you can see for yourself how the Multicooker turns out all kinds of delightful perfectly-cooked dishes.

Here, too, you can see the various models of the Multicooker and can choose just the one best suited for the requirements of your own home. Or, if you cannot conveniently call, the fullest Particulars can be obtained through the post.

The enormous reduction of housekeeping expenses,



A FULL COURSE DINNER COOKED
with one burner at a cost of 1½d. per hour.

Now that the cost of living is going up by leaps and bounds every housewife will be delighted with the saving in gas and the saving in food effected by the wonderful new Multicooker Invention. To be able to cook a number of dishes at the same time on one gas burner of ordinary consumption at a total cost of 1½d. per hour for gas is the greatest step yet made to combat high prices.

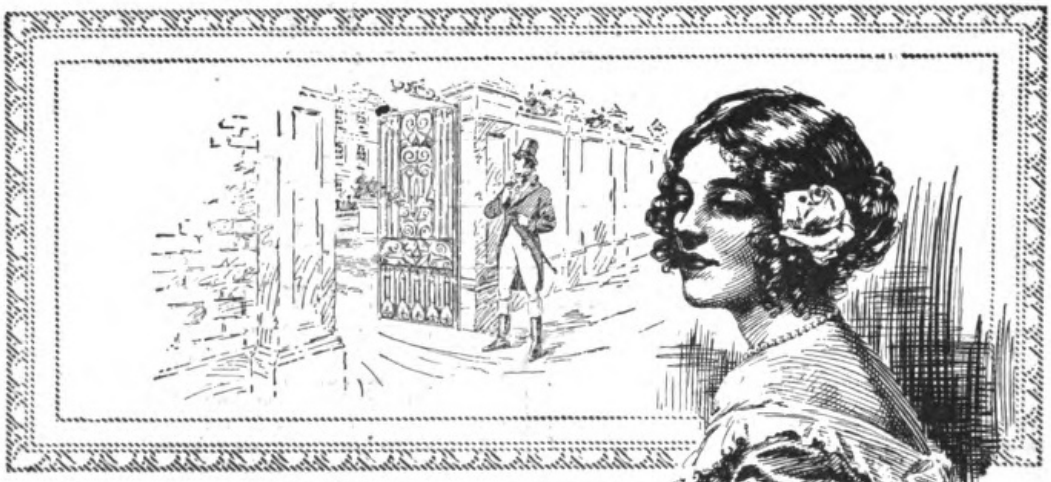
by the saving in the weight of food cooked, the remarkably small consumption of gas, and the saving of time and trouble achieved by the Multicooker Method are such that every household in the country will shortly be enjoying the wonderful benefits of this revolutionary discovery in the principles of economical cookery.

Mr. A. T. Hickinbotham (25 years Statutory Gas Examiner for the County of London) states that the Super Multicooker is the biggest advance in cooking appliances he has examined during his 30 years' scientific experience in the Gas world.

Mrs. L. G. Burrows, of W. Ealing, says:—

"Having had one of your Multicookers and an Oven in use since June, 1918, I thought you might like to know that I am very pleased both with the way everything bakes in it, also with the gas saved by using it in place of an ordinary gas cooker. The readings of the Meter show A SAVING OF 11,000 FEET OF GAS IN ONE YEAR, and I have had quite as many hot meals, if not more than usual. . . ."

A most interesting Pamphlet, fully describing the new "Multicooker," and giving illustrations of the various models, in addition to valuable Cookery Information, can be obtained by simply writing a postcard to THE MULTI-COOKER INVENTIONS, LTD. (Room 50), 42, BERNERS STREET, OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W. The Public Demonstrations are from ten to six o'clock daily, and all readers are cordially welcomed free of charge.





Maud.

Beautiful Women of Fiction

THE perfect beauty of Maud awoke a passionate love which called forth all the affection of her nature, and swept away from her lover's heart the hate and bitterness of a great wrong.

Beauty is greatly desired by every lady who prizes her appearance. A clear, fresh complexion, radiant with health, is a possession of untold value. The regular use of Royal Vinolia Vanishing Cream helps to retain the charming bloom of youth.

This exquisite Toilet Cream softens and beautifies the skin, and enhances the natural charms of the complexion. Use it in the morning toilet and throughout the day. It is entirely free from grease and vanishes instantly on the skin.

***Pots*, 1/3. *Tubes*, 7½d. & 1/-**

***Royal Vinolia Complexion Powder** is delightful for the dainty toilet. In three tints, Blanche, Naturelle, Rachel.* **2/- per Box.**

"Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one."

— Tennyson.



Royal Vinolia
VANISHING CREAM.

R V 346—25

Vinolia Co Ltd. London.

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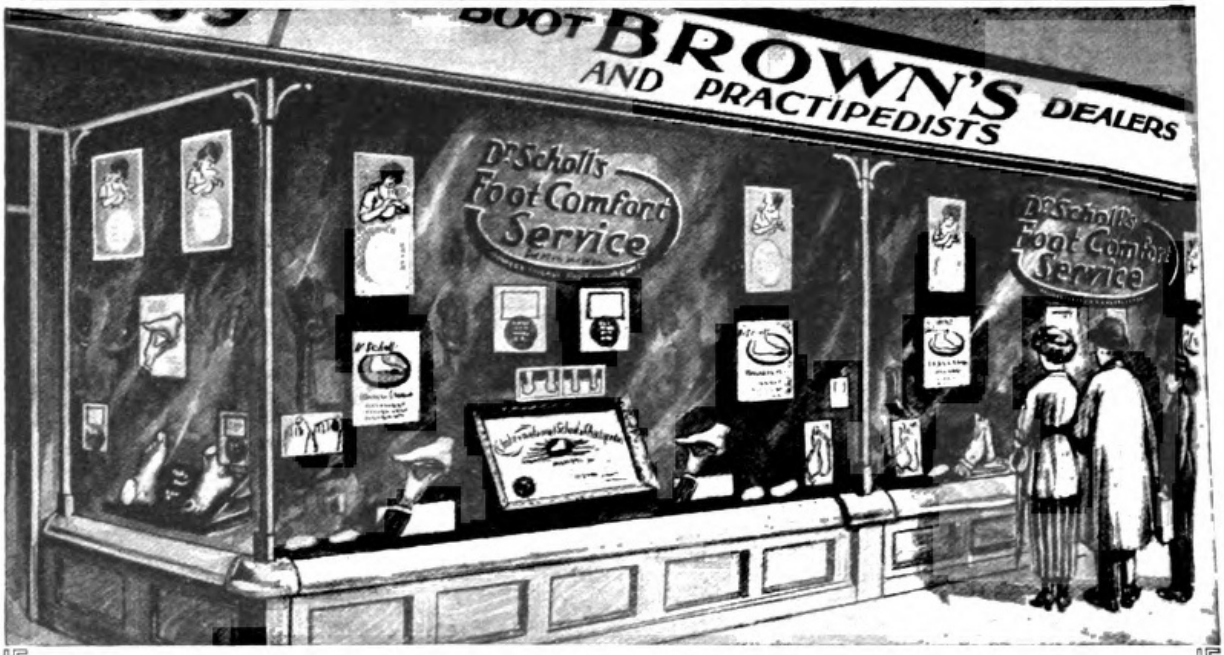
Father comes in like this

Once every week. There's a scurry: a cry of "Here's the Mackintosh's—and Father." Dad knows what the children like, and what's the right kind of sweet to keep them healthy and plump. But the children don't eat all the Mackintosh's, not by lumps and lumps.

Regularly each week-end enter your hall door behind a Family Tin of this full-of-food sweetmeat—made from lots and lots of very good things.

Sold by Confectioners everywhere in 4-lb. Family Tins, and loose by weight.

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Free Advice on Foot Ailments

By "Practipedist" Dealers.

When you see Dr. SCHOLL'S Foot Comfort Appliances and Specialities in a boot dealer's window you can be certain that dealer is a live, high-grade man whom it will pay you to deal with. He has gone through a special course of training in Foot Anatomy, Foot Ailments and their relief and correction by Dr. SCHOLL'S scientific methods, and he places his expert knowledge, free of charge, at your disposal. "SCHOLL" dealers all stock, and are qualified to select, fit, and adjust

Dr Scholl's
Corrective Foot Appliances

for all everyday foot troubles.

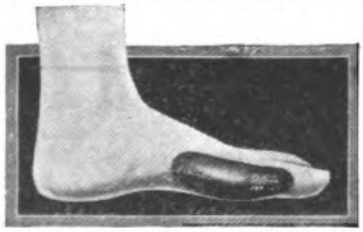
Weak or flat foot, weak ankles and run-over heels, pains through the instep, the heel, or at the ball of the foot, bunions, crooked buckled-up toes, corns and callouses, etc., positively are unnecessary. Dr. SCHOLL'S wonderful relief-giving appliances and specialities immediately remove the cause of foot aches and foot pains, and the corrective influence they exert restores and straightens the weakened, overstrained muscles, ligaments, tendons, and bone structure, and quickly banishes painful bunions, corns, and all toe troubles.

Hundreds of thousands have testified to the worth of "SCHOLL" appliances. Don't accept any other.

We can give you the name and address of the "SCHOLL" dealer in your locality. Write to-day for it, and a free copy of Dr. SCHOLL'S booklet, "THE FEET AND THEIR CARE."

THE SCHOLL MFG. CO., LTD., 1-4, Giltspur Street, London, E.C.1.

PARIS: 47, Rue d'Enghien. MELBOURNE: 382, Lonsdale St. DUNEDIN, N.Z.: 18, Dowling St.



DR. SCHOLL'S BUNION REDUCER protects the sensitive inflamed area from pressure. Reduces the enlargement by absorption, and stops shoe bulging. Rights and Lefts in men's and women's sizes. Each **2-**



DR. SCHOLL'S TOE-FLEX straightens distorted, crooked toes. Restores normal muscular action, and, by closing the big toe joint, corrects bunions. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes. Each **1/6**



DR, SCHOLL'S FOOT-EAZER affords comfort and relief in a moment to tired, aching feet, weak arches, flat foot, etc. Worn comfortably in your ordinary shoes. Price per pair **9/6**

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Simple Appliance Replaces Truss. Sent on Trial to Prove It.

Don't Wear a Truss Any Longer.

After Thirty Years' Experience we have produced an Appliance for Men, Women, and Children that actually Cures Rupture.

If you have tried almost every thing else come to us. Where others fail is where we have our greatest success. Send attached coupon to-day and we will send you free our illustrated book on Rupture and its cure, showing the Appliance, and giving you prices and names of many people who have tried it and are extremely grateful. It is instant relief when all others fail. Remember we use no salves, no harness, no lies.

We send on trial to prove what we say is true. You are the judge, and having once seen our illustrated book and read it, you will be as enthusiastic as hundreds of patients whose letters you can also read. Fill in the free coupon below and post to-day. It is well worth your time, whether you try our Appliance or not.



From a photograph of Mr. C. E. Brooks, inventor of the Appliance, who cured himself, and whose experience has since benefited thousands. If ruptured, write to-day.

TEN REASONS WHY

You Should Send for the Brooks Rupture Appliance.

1. It is absolutely the only Appliance of the kind on the market to-day, and in it are embodied the principles that inventors have sought after for years.
2. The Appliance for retaining the rupture cannot be thrown out of position.
3. Being an air-cushion of soft rubber, it clings closely to the body, yet never blisters or causes irritation.
4. Unlike the ordinary so-called pads used in common trusses, it is not cumbersome or ungainly.
5. It is small, soft, and pliable, and positively cannot be detected through the clothing.
6. The soft, pliable bands holding the Appliance do not give one the unpleasant sensation of wearing a harness.
7. There is nothing about it to get foul, and when it becomes soiled it can be washed without injuring it in the least.
8. There are no metal springs in the Appliance to torture one by cutting and bruising the flesh.
9. All the material of which the Appliances are made is of the very best that money can buy, making it a durable and safe Appliance to wear.
10. Our reputation for honesty and fair dealing is so thoroughly established by an experience of over thirty years of dealing with the public, and the prices are so reasonable, the terms so fair, that there certainly should be no hesitancy in sending the free coupon to-day.

Every Ruptured Person should know of Your Appliance.

Llangan Villa, near Whitland, Carmar.

I am pleased to say that my husband is quite cured of his rupture since wearing your Appliance. He has left off wearing it now, and feels all right. I have strongly recommended them to many, and feel that every ruptured person should know of your Appliance and the good it has done after suffering with worthless trusses. We would be pleased to answer any questions to anyone enclosing a stamped addressed envelope.

(Mrs.) D. WILLIAMS.

Perfectly Cured at 74.

Jubilee Homes, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks.

To Mr. Brooks.

Dear Sir,—I, Henry Salter, have much pleasure in saying that I am perfectly satisfied with the Rupture Appliance. You are welcome to use my name where the British flag flies, and all other nations on the face of the globe. Dear sir, I cannot thank you enough for relieving my suffering. I shall recommend you to any of my friends. I am pleased to say it is a permanent cure.

I remain, yours obediently,
HENRY SALTER.

P.S.—My age is 74 years, perfectly cured.

I am Entirely Cured.

12, Union Street, Clydebank.

It gives me great pleasure to add my testimony to the real worth of your Rupture Appliance. It surpasses a great deal, in my opinion, even what you yourself claim for it, and that is saying a good deal. I reckon it a rare combination of simplicity, neatness, and usefulness in its line, so much so that, although I quite believe I am entirely cured, I have no desire to dispense with it, as it causes no inconvenience whatever. I can indulge in any kind of exercise common to men without the slightest fear, which I could not do before I got it. I am pleased to be able to give this report, and consider it my duty to do so.

Yours faithfully,
P. BELL.

8-Weeks-Old Baby Perfectly Cured.

27, New Street, Littshill, Staffs.

I now take great pleasure in thanking you for the Appliance, as it has been a perfect cure for my little boy. He was only eight weeks old when I tried the Appliance, and is now perfectly cured at six months. I shall certainly recommend your Appliance as being a perfect cure. Thanking you greatly for what you have done for me.

Mrs. SMITH.

Remember.

We send the Appliance on trial to prove that what we say is true. You are to be the judge. Fill in the free coupon below and post to-day.

If in London, call at our consulting rooms. Experienced and capable fitters for ladies and gentlemen.

Free Information Coupon.

Brooks Appliance Co., Ltd.
(1560A), 80, Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2.

Please send me by post, in plain wrapper, illustrated book and full information about The Brooks Appliance for the cure of rupture.

Name .....

Address .....

(Please write plainly.) .....

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The "ADAPTA" Bed-Table



A MODERN COMFORT.

Can be instantly raised, lowered, or inclined. It extends over bed, couch, or chair without touching it, and is the ideal Table for reading or taking meals in bed with ease and comfort. By pressing a button the top can be adjusted to various inclinations. It cannot overbalance. Comprises Bed Table, Reading Stand, Writing Table, Bed Rest, Card Table, etc. British made.

(Patented)

No. 1.—Enamelled Metal Parts, with Polished Wood Top **£2 5 0**

No. 3.—Ditto, with Adjustable Side Tray and Polished Oak Top (*as illustrated*) .. **£4 4 0**

No. 5.—Complete as No. 3, but with Detachable Candle Sconce, and all Metal Parts finished Polished Brass ... **£5 17 6**

Carriage Paid in Great Britain. **Write for Booklet A3.**

J. FOOT & SON, Ltd.,
171, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1.

Why buy a Boche Hollow Ground Razor?

The APEX Razor

IS HOLLOW GROUND IN SHEFFIELD AND MAKES SHAVING A PLEASURE.

PRICE **6/6** *each, with case.*



Every Razor set and stropped ready for use.

May be obtained from all Ironmongers, Cutlers, &c. If any difficulty in obtaining, write for name of nearest agent to the sole makers:

Wheatley Brothers, Ltd., Wheatsheaf Works, **Sheffield**

The Hall Mark of Quality F.H&W YOUR GUARANTEE

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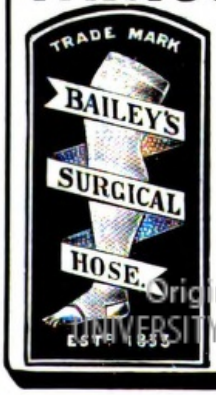
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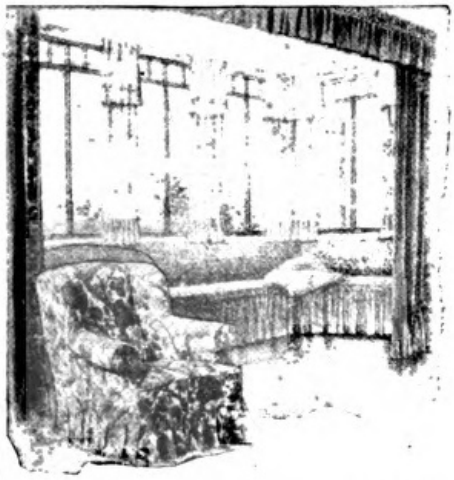


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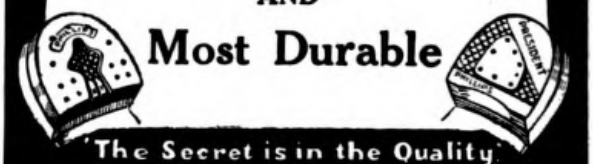
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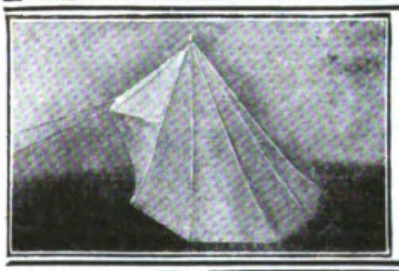
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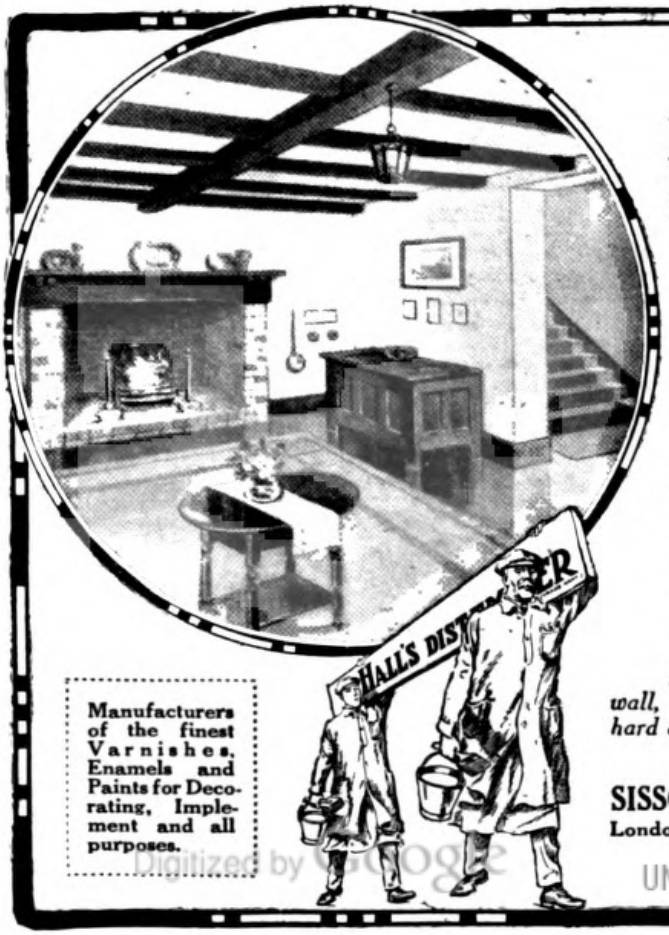
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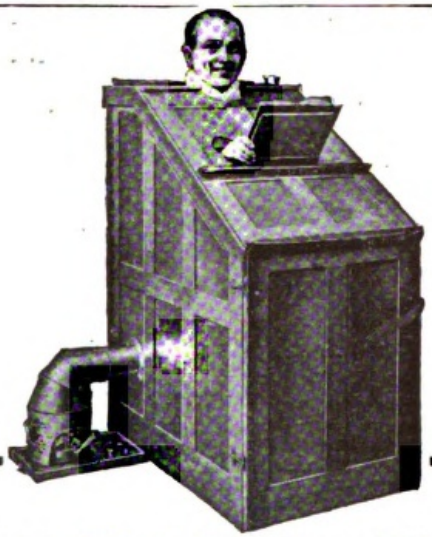
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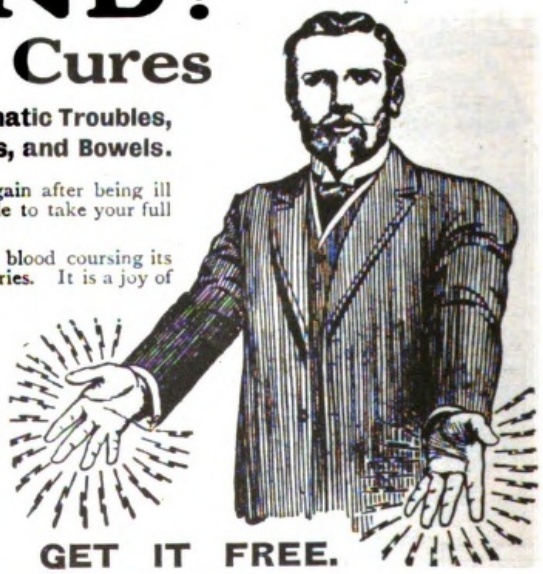
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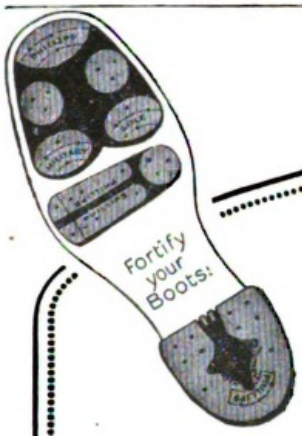
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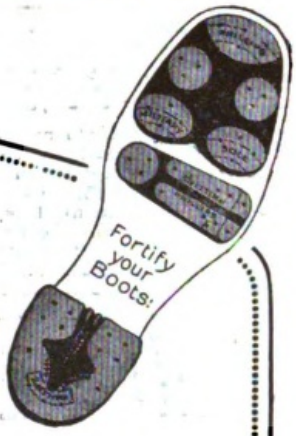


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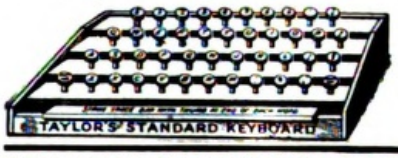
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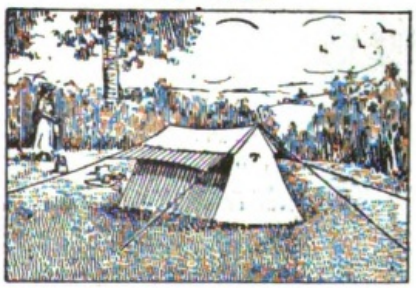
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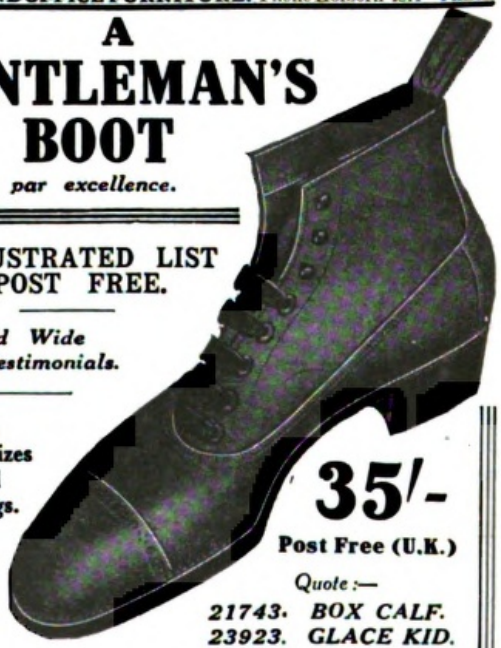
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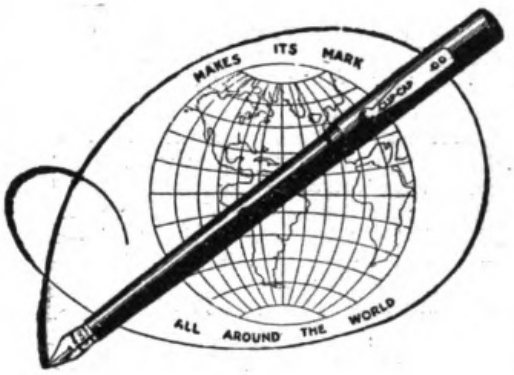


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THE STRAND MAGAZINE.

Contents for June, 1920.

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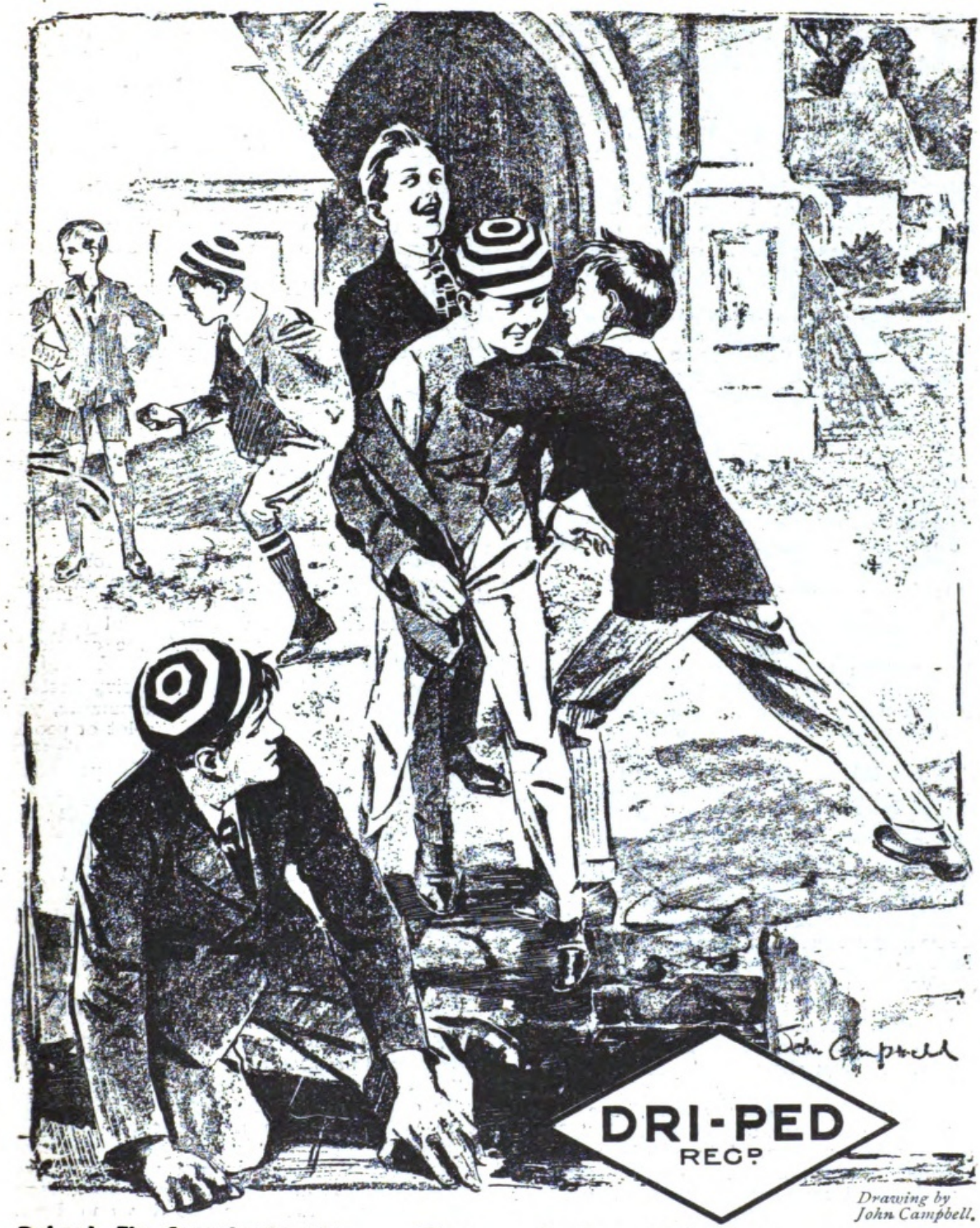
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P.850

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To face end of Text.

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

A FANCY DRESS FRIENDSHIP.

"I WISH," said Helen, as she gave her hair a final pat, "that I could get hold of a really decent costume for to-morrow night. This Jazz affair is getting dreadfully tired. And every other girl in the room is wearing its twin sister."

A pretty rose-and-grey Pierrette who was adjusting her right shoe nodded reflectively.

"M'm," she said. "But it's no good worrying. It's a bore not being a plutocrat . . . I say, Helen . . . just look there!"

The two girls gazed fascinated at a woman who had just slipped off her cloak. She wore a delicious eighteenth-century costume of mauve satin over a sprigged petticoat. A white powdered wig set off her softly glowing face and a patch was perched naughtily in one dimple.

"Isn't she exquisite?" whispered Helen. "I think those old-fashioned things are enchanting . . . and original these days!"

. . . . . .

It was a very depressed Helen who changed her shoes in the dressing-room after the dance.

"I *can't* go to the 'Excelsior' in this to-morrow night," she confided to Mabel. "I'll have to tell Guy I've got a headache or something."

"Poor old girl," sympathised her friend. "I've only this one fancy dress and I haven't a sou in the wide. Oh, I say, I was introduced to that lovely creature . . . she's a Mrs. Beauchamp. She's asked me to have tea at her flat to-morrow . . . here she is . . . I'll introduce you too."

. . . . . .

The following afternoon Helen and Mabel were having tea with Mrs. Beauchamp.

Mrs. Beauchamp's appearance by daylight had given both girls something of a shock. Her frock was pretty, her complexion beautiful, but the lovely wig of the previous night had given place to her own hair, which was lank, dull and straight. Though she seemed young there was already more than one grey streak in her locks.

"I'm so glad you liked my frock," she smiled, in answer to a remark of Mabel's . . . "But it always depresses me so. I do wish I lived in the eighteenth century, or that wigs were the fashion now-a-days. I *can't* camouflage my horrid hair anyway by daylight! Have another cake, Helen, they're *real* cream! Forgive my being frightfully rude, but could you tell me where you get your hair waved? Or is it natural? Because I was admiring it all the time at the dance."

Helen laughed.

"Can't afford to patronise hairdressers," she answered, "and it isn't natural. No, I just use *silmerine*." She finished as if that explained everything. Mrs. Beauchamp knitted her brows.

"Silmerine?" she inquired. "I'm afraid I'm very ignorant. What is it? Where do you get it? What do you do with it?"

"One at a time," laughed Helen. "It is a rather nice-smelling colourless liquid. You can get it from any chemist's. You just damp your hair with it, put in slides where you want the wave . . . and, voilà, ze curls . . ."

"But that's too wonderful," exclaimed Mrs. Beauchamp. "Do you have to use it every day?"

"Oh, no . . . the effects last for some days. And the queer thing is that the more you use silmerine the less often you require it. It seems to coax the hair into natural waves that stay in of their own accord."

"If my hair weren't so odiously thin and streaky," said Mrs. Beauchamp, "I would rush out this minute and buy a bottle before I have another sandwich. But my grey locks would look too ridiculous in waves."

"Mrs. Beauchamp," put in Helen, "I'm going to reveal a horrid secret. A little while ago I found some grey hairs on my own head. Mabel's fair; she won't go grey so soon. So I got a packet of *tammalite* and dissolved it in bay rum, and put it on the faded parts with a clean little brush. It was wonderful the way that it gradually brought back the colour to my hair."

"How lovely," exclaimed their hostess. "Yes, I really must try that. Tammalite, you said, didn't you? By the way, a lot of people I know are using *boranium* as a hair tonic, but so far I haven't tried it. Do either of you know if it's any good?"

"Any good?" chorused the two girls . . . "Why, it's the only thing . . ."

"I mix it with bay rum——"

"My hair's grown heaps thicker since I used it."

"Good gracious," interposed Mrs. Beauchamp . . . "I suppose I shall have to use it too. I'll put it down with the tammalite. What do you shampoo with?" she asked.

This time Mabel answered . . . "Oh, the usual . . . *Stallax*, you know."

"Stallax? I don't seem to know it. Is it some special preparation?"

"I don't think so," replied Mabel. "It is quite ordinary stuff, I believe. You can buy it in ¼-lb. tins from most chemists. But it makes the most lovely shampoo; it lathers gorgeously in any water and your hair dries quickly after it and looks so soft and bright. My own hair always gets so dry and brittle after a shampoo of any kind that I always massage my scalp with olive oil before washing it."

"That's awfully nice to know," said Mrs. Beauchamp . . . "really, I'm most intensely grateful to you two girls. By the way, Helen, didn't you say something about wanting a fancy dress for the 'Excelsior' dance to-night? You wouldn't care to borrow my rig-out, I suppose? It's just your size, and I know it would suit you."

"Mrs. Beauchamp," said Helen, "you're one of the best."

PARKER BELMONT'S CLYNOL BERRIES FOR OBESITY.—[ADVT.]

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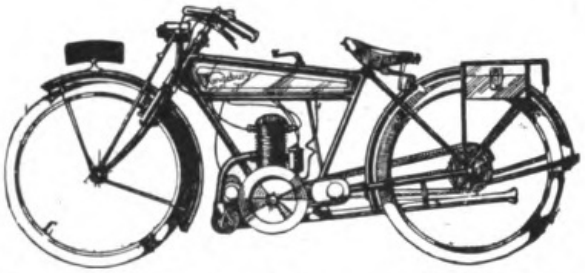
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Saddle

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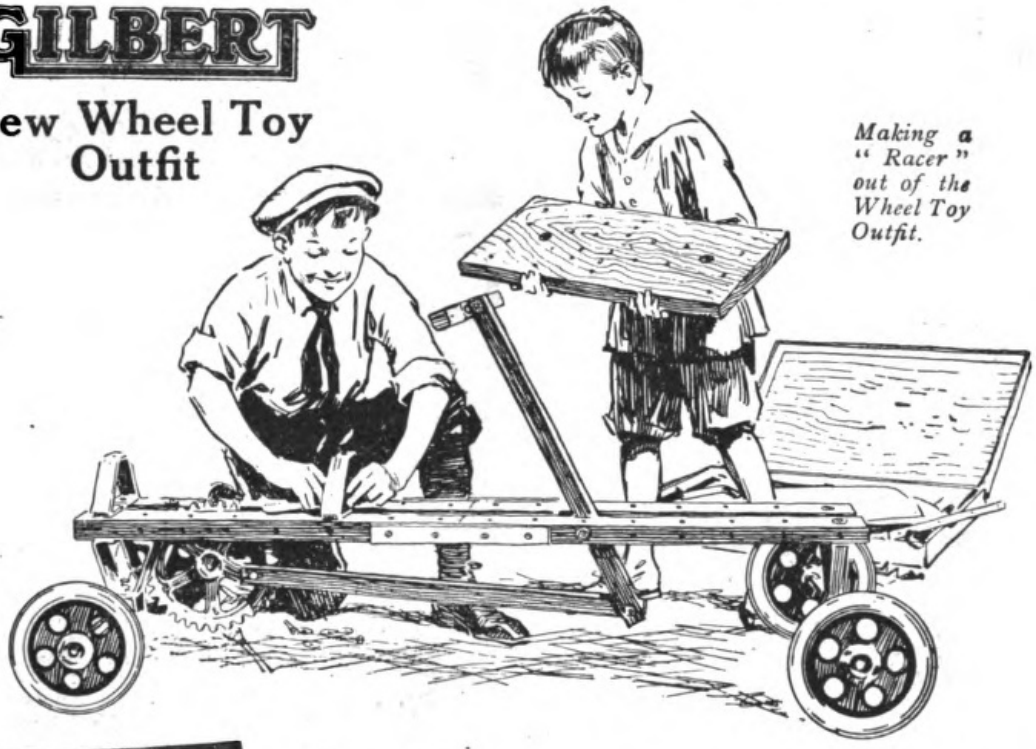
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Making a "Racer" out of the Wheel Toy Outfit.



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You can make a new toy whenever you want it—coasters and racers and scooters that are strong and speedy, snappy-looking express carts, baggage trucks, wheelbarrows, go-carts, etc.

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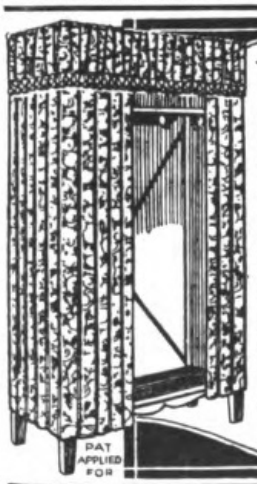
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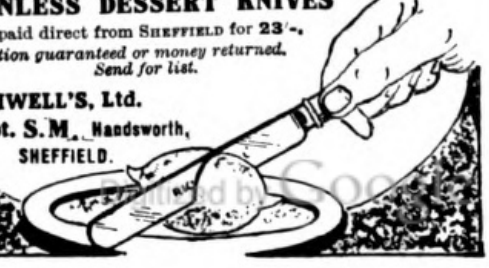
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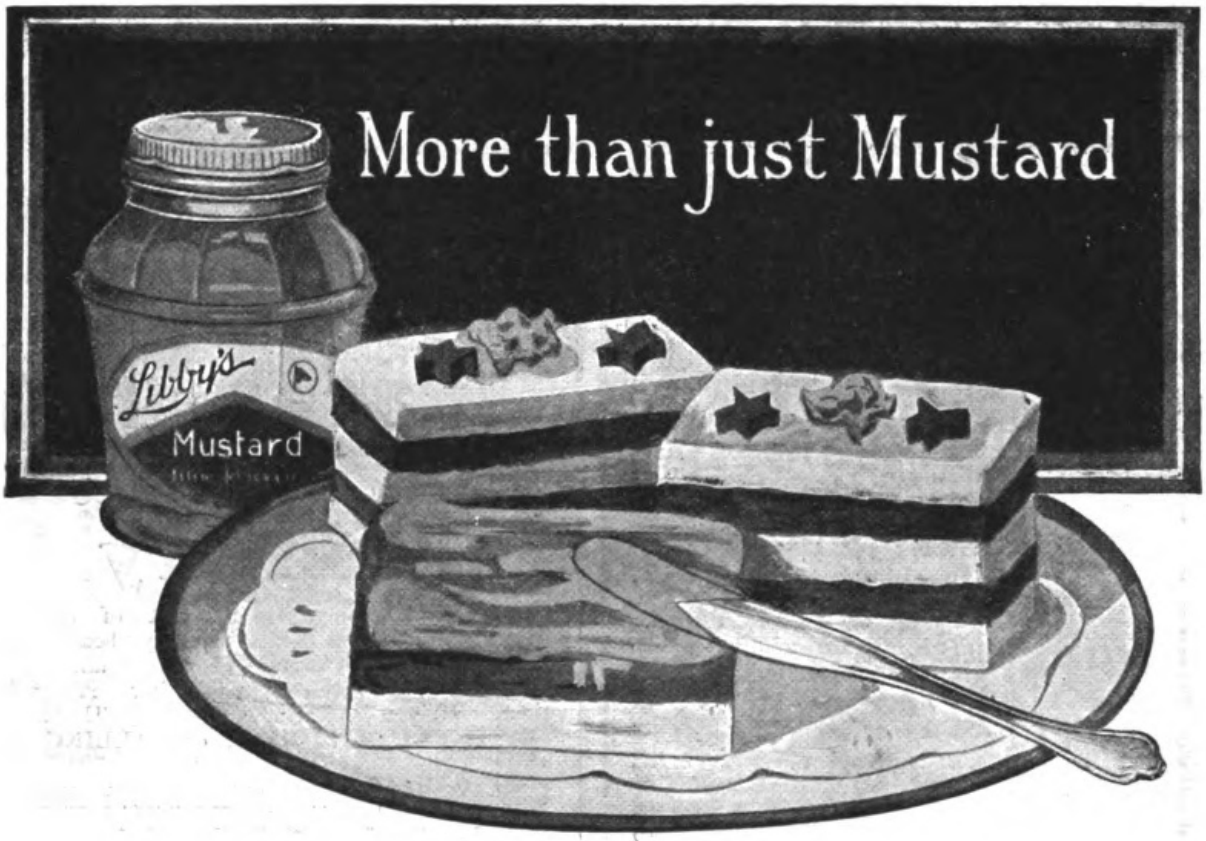
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Wash and dry water-cress, chop it finely, and spread a thick layer on thin sliced, buttered bread; cover with Libby's Mustard and another piece of bread and press well together.

When you order Libby's Prepared Mustard, also ask your grocer for Libby's Mayonnaise Salad Dressing—makes all salads twice as tempting. Libby's Tomato Catchup—the premier of all relishes.

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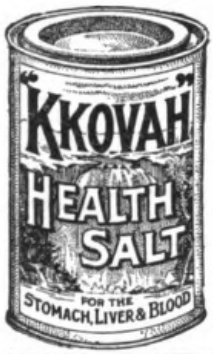
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You know if you're not feeling really well, everything seems to go wrong, and little troubles and worries are magnified to an alarming extent.

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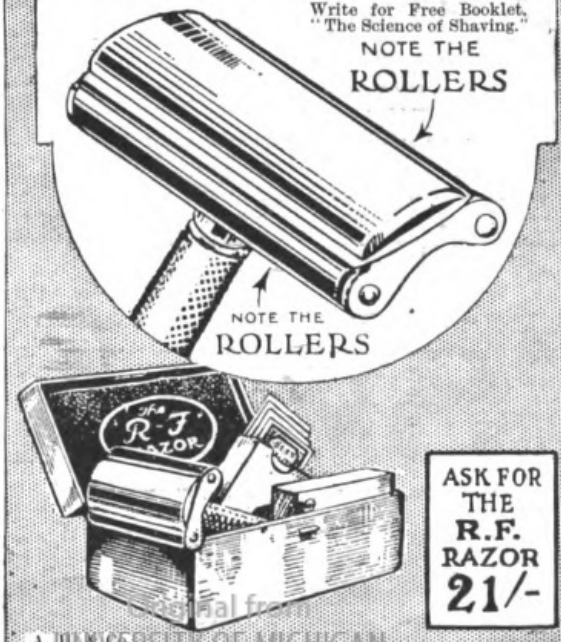
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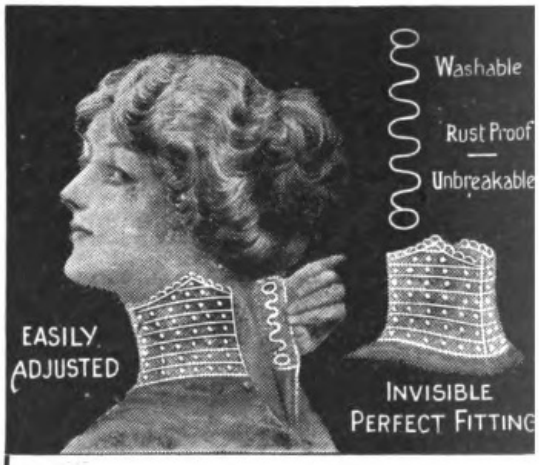
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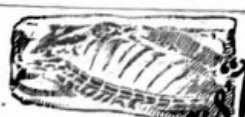
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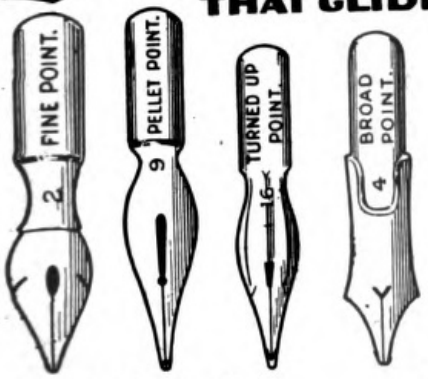
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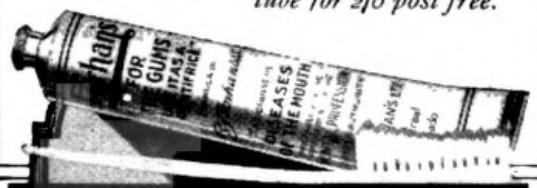
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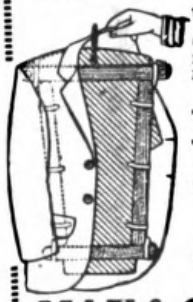
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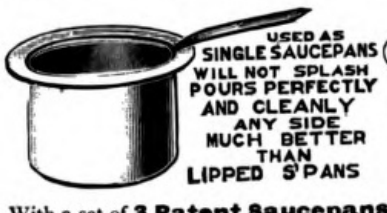
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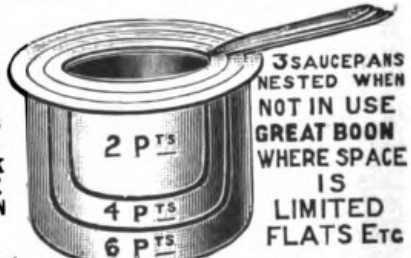
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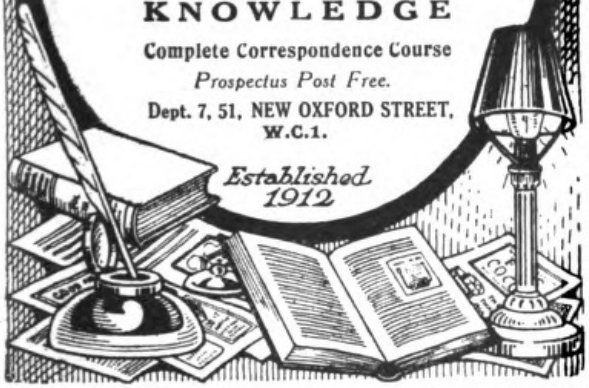
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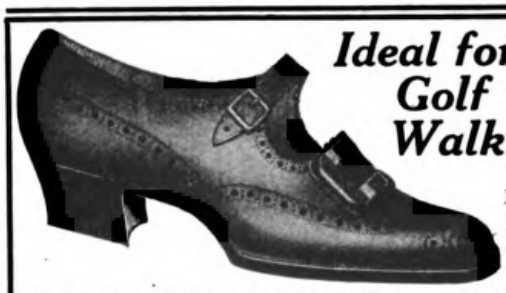
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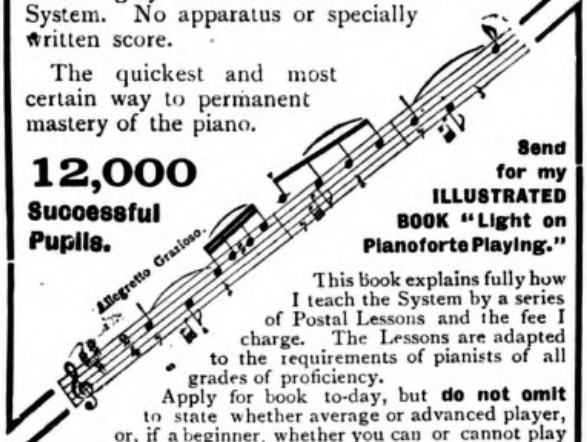
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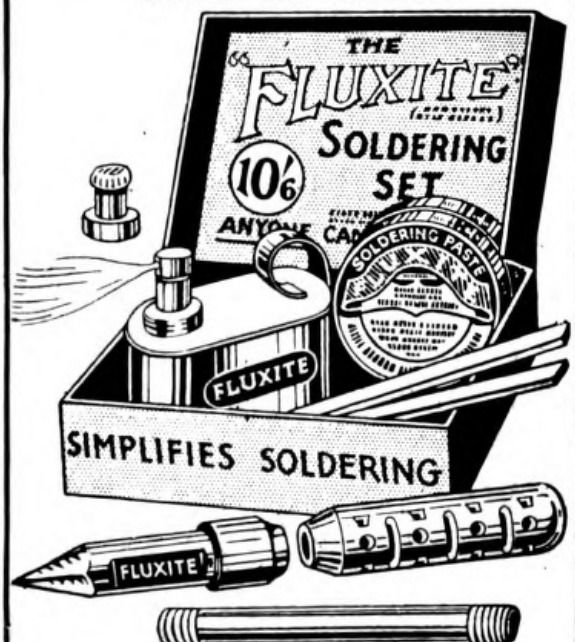
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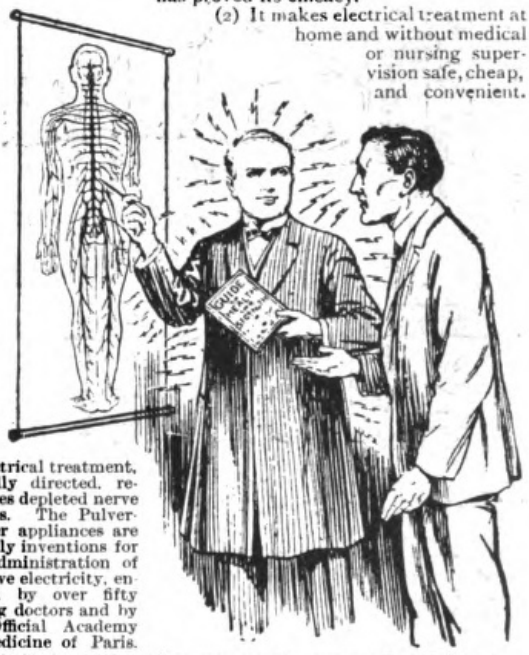
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English and American Studies in German

Summaries of Theses and Monographs

A Supplement to Anglia

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the vast area of popular entertainment from the minstrel show to the soap opera, which has recently found increasing historical and sociological attention, is not treated systematically but mentioned whenever it has proved a formal or material influence on drama proper. Similarly, film and television are briefly discussed in their financial and sociological significance as rival mass entertainments, as important fields of activity for several playwrights, and, occasionally, for remarkable adaptations of stage plays.

The recent upsurge in critical and historical writing on American drama and theatre is covered in a 20-page select bibliography concentrating on full-length books in English (and German), but also including, especially for younger contemporary dramatists, a few shorter studies. The bibliography is subdivided into a general section (bibliographies, works of reference, periodicals, anthologies of plays, criticism and reviews, thematic monographs, histories), a section on individual authors (editions of plays, non-dramatic writings, bibliographies, and other works of reference, critical and biographical studies, interpretations of individual plays), and a section of thematic supplements to several chapters. An exhaustive 12-page index makes persons, plays, and major items of drama and theatre history readily accessible.

71 Werner Faulstich, **Medienästhetik und Mediengeschichte. Mit einer Fallstudie zu 'The War of the Worlds' von H.G. Wells. [Media Aesthetics and Media History. With a Case Study of 'The War of the Worlds' by H.G. Wells.]** Reihe Siegen, 38, Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1982, 283 pp., DM 129.–.

72 Werner Faulstich, **Radiotheorie. Eine Studie zum Hörspiel 'The War of the Worlds' (1938) von Orson Welles. [Radio Theory. An Analysis and Interpretation of the Radio Play 'The War of the Worlds' (1938) by Orson Welles.]** Medienbibliothek-Studien, 1, Tübingen: Narr, 1981, 130 pp., DM 36.–.

73 Werner Faulstich, **Filmästhetik. Untersuchungen zum Science Fiction-Film 'Kampf der Welten' (1953/54) von Byron Haskin. [Film Aesthetics. Studies of the Science-Fiction Film 'The War of the Worlds' (1953/54) by Byron Haskin.]** Medienbibliothek-Studien, 3, Tübingen: Narr, 1982, 148 pp., DM 34.–.

74 Werner Faulstich, **Ästhetik des Fernsehens. Eine Fallstudie zum Dokumentarspiel 'Die Nacht, als die Marsmenschen Amerika angriffen' (1976) von Joseph Sargent. [Aesthetics of Television. A Case Study of the Documentary Play 'The Night that Panicked America' (1976) by Joseph Sargent.]** Medienbibliothek-Studien, 4, Tübingen: Narr, 1982, 208 pp., DM 36.–.

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75 Werner Faulstich, **Jeff Wayne: 'The War of the Worlds'. Analyse und Interpretation einer Popmusik-Oper. [Jeff Wayne: 'The War of the Worlds'. Analysis and Interpretation of a Rock Opera.]** Tübingen: Privately printed, 1982, 208 pp., DM 18.–.

These five books present the results of a long-term comparative study of all versions of 'The War of the Worlds' in all media, in particular: the novel by H.G. Wells, the radio play by Orson Welles, the feature film by Byron Haskin, the television play by Joseph Sargent, and the rock music opera by Jeff Wayne. Each version is analysed and interpreted in the light of its medium. Pursuing a dialectic approach, attention is focused both on the single work and the general medium. Completely new interpretations of the various versions are suggested and fresh insights are made into the possibilities and limits of aesthetic products within their different media.

The first book, *Media Aesthetics and Media History*, is divided into three parts. Part 1 offers the basis for a critical rejection of the traditional theory of 'the original' and then presents both a new theory of literature (in media) and a new approach to its appreciation. Part 2 seeks to demonstrate the value of the theoretical conception by applying it to *The War of the Worlds* by H.G. Wells – the novel is shown to be a work of art that can only properly be understood by reference to the state of development of the print media at the end of the last century. Part 3 outlines the history of the individual work *The War of the Worlds* through the various media and shows it to be dependent on the history of the various media themselves.

The second book, *Radio Theory*, is the first of a series of three books concentrating on the aesthetic laws of a specific medium, in this case radio. It is shown that radio functions according to various rules which are imposed on any radio play whatsoever. Five basic categories are suggested to govern all radio products: radio as a live medium, a monosensoral medium, a medium of illusion, a medium of *Angst*, and a magazine-like medium. In these terms, a completely new interpretation of *The War of the Worlds* as a radio play is offered, based on a detailed sound transcript which has been published as an independent book (Werner Faulstich, *'The War of the Worlds'/'Der Krieg der Welten': Vier Hörspiele*. [*Four Radio Plays.*] Medienbibliothek-Texte, 2, Tübingen: Narr, 1981, 115 pp., DM 16.80.).

The third book, *Film Aesthetics*, attempts to do the same for the film medium. Here, the fundamental perspectives on film as art are described in terms of, again, five different categories: the film as a medium of realism, as a medium of violence (in form, not in content), as a technical and as a commercial product, and as a medium of dream and myth. The study bridges the gap between film analysis and film theory and a new interpretation of the Hollywood film *The War of the Worlds* by Byron Haskin is offered by reference to the shooting

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transcript of the film (published separately by Werner Faulstich, *Byron Haskin: 'Kampf der Welten'/'The War of the Worlds'*, Medienbibliothek-Texte, 7, Tübingen: Narr, 1982, 126 pp., DM 16.80.).

The fourth book, *Aesthetics of Television*, deals with this latest electronic medium in very much the same way as the previous two studies. TV is shown to follow four basic rules: those of entertainment, manipulation, serialization, and substitution. Each of these categories provides access to a pre-determined web of aesthetic factors such as authenticity, authoritarian nature, episodic structure, personalization, realism of details combined with a deceptive plot, etc. It is argued that television, in its present form, cannot escape from what is shown to be an "aesthetics of destruction". Against this background, the television documentary play *The Night that Panicked America* by Joseph Sargent can be seen in a completely different light. The shooting transcript of the documentary play has been published as an adjunct to this study (Werner Faulstich, *Joseph Sargent: 'Die Nacht, als die Marsmenschen Amerika angriffen'/'The Night that Panicked America'*, Medienbibliothek-Texte, 10, Tübingen: Narr, 1982, 157 pp., DM 17.80.).

The fifth and final book is devoted to Jeff Wayne's musical version of *The War of the Worlds* which has achieved best-seller status over the past few years. The book has two major aims: first, to analyse and interpret the rock opera as a piece of popular literature which is purveyed through the medium of record; second, to document and explain its rise to an international best-seller. It is argued that in this case artistic and commercial success are inseparably linked. Special attention is paid to the structure of the rock opera as a multi-media work, to a description and scene-by-scene analysis of the epic drama with special reference to its musical dramatization, and to the appreciation and criticism of the work especially in England, Australia, New Zealand, and Germany.

76 Edgar Kleinen, **Amerikanische Geschichte im amerikanischen historischen Drama seit Maxwell Anderson. Forschungsbericht, Werkinterpretation, gattungsgeschichtlicher Wertungsversuch. [American History in American Historical Drama since Maxwell Anderson. Research, Analysis, Genre.]** Dissertation, Mainz (Prof. H. Galinsky). Mainzer Studien zur Amerikanistik, 16, Bern, Frankfurt/Main: Lang, 1982, 319 pp., SFr 71.–.

American playwrights of the twentieth century have repeatedly been attracted to historical subjects. The present study analyzes eight American plays dealing with American history. These analyses of individual plays are preceded by a survey of research on the relationship between history and literature in general and history and drama in particular. Since previous research concentrated on

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the selection of historical material and the authors' intentions, a detailed investigation of the process of dramatizing the historical material (in the form of written and/or oral sources) has so far been lacking.

With regard to the authors' intentions five possibilities have been presented: (1) to explain history, (2) to glorify the national past, (3) to justify past national behaviour, (4) to discuss contemporary problems under the guise of a historical subject, and (5) to draw a lesson from history either to warn against future dangers or to show future possibilities.

In order not to obtain biased results the present study includes a representative selection of American plays dealing with American history: Maxwell Anderson's and Harold Hickerson's treatment of the Sacco-Vanzetti Case, *Gods of the Lightning* (1928); a Living Newspaper production of the Federal Theatre Project, *Triple-A Plowed Under* (1936); Robert E. Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* (1938), a dramatization of Lincoln's development from the 1830s to his departure for Washington in 1861; Arthur Miller's play on the Salem Witchcraft Trials, *The Crucible* (1953); Dore Schary's dramatic presentation of Franklin D. Roosevelt's fight against polio, *Sunrise at Campobello* (1958); Martin Duberman's documentary play about the meaning of being Black *In White America* (1963); Paul Foster's *Tom Paine* (1967); and Arthur Kopit's dramatization of the treatment of the American Indian in *Indians* (1968).

The analyses of these plays are carried out in five steps: (1) reception of theatrical performance(s) and the published text, with emphasis on the use of history; (2) a short presentation of the historical subject-matter and a discussion of why the author chose it; (3) a comparison of the historical sources with the dramatic presentation; (4) reasons for the preservation or the change of the historical sources by the author; (5) evaluation of the playwright's use of history.

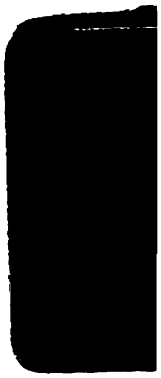
In all eight instances, the dramatization of history shows clear references to the time of production. In the two earliest plays, *Gods of the Lightning* and *Triple-A Plowed Under*, the contemporary subject matter makes for topicality. History as analogy to the present characterizes *Abe Lincoln in Illinois, The Crucible*, and *Indians*, and, to a certain degree, *Tom Paine. In White America* regards the present as a logical continuation of the past. Dore Schary's play aims at a better understanding of its protagonist and *Tom Paine* reminds its audience of the unfulfilled promises of the Declaration of Independence. In all of the plays discussed, with the exception of *Sunrise at Campobello*, the authors' treatment of history shows their intention to criticize the economic, social, and/or political situation in contemporary America.

With regard to authenticity, the eight plays differ greatly. *In White America* relies almost exclusively on historical documents, whereas *Indians* and *Triple-A Plowed Under* show a high degree of alienation and distortion. Regardless of the degree of authenticity, five of the plays represent a p[illegible] of

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